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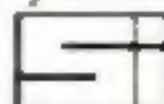
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AUTOSPORT

BRITAIN'S MOTOR SPORTING WEEKLY

November 28 1973 Volume 11 No 3

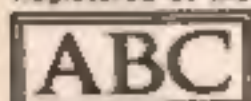
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The loser: Bjorn Waldegaard (left) looks on as mechanics tape up the BMW windscreen after he rolled and lost his second place on the RAC Rally.



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EDITORIAL

With the threat of petrol rationing now very real, we must be assured that the RAC as the governing body, is fully aware of the dangers which face motor sport in the near future.

Last week they answered a request from the Ministry of Transport Industries to cut down motor sport by banning all rallies. The next request may well be to cut down racing—the national press and TV were soon on the attack in making an example of last weekend's club meeting at Brands Hatch—and very soon the public will be hoodwinked into thinking that it would be a good idea to stop all forms of motor sport.

Obviously we all have to suffer in some way or another, but the RAC must fight for the multi million pound industry which is concentrated in this country. RAC's motor sport director Dean Delamont was less than convincing on Wheelbase last week when he told the viewers what the position over rallies was and that it was too early to tell how the rest of the sport would be affected.

The livelihood of thousands of people is at stake, not to mention a substantial contribution to the country's economy. The Director of British motor sport and its committee has got to safeguard this.

There is no reason at all why motor sport alone should bow down to the request without some sort of fight back. Last Saturday thousands of gallons of fuel were used by people going to football matches and similar sporting occasions. Obviously we must respect the situation, but we cannot allow the RAC to accept sweeping cancellations in motor sport when other activities are allowed to carry on, as though nothing was happening.

The RAC must answer any Government requests in a responsible manner and point out that many times more fuel could be saved by asking other controlling bodies to cut down or provide alternatives to car transport. It is just not fair to those involved for a complete cessation of events to be ordered without other spheres making some contribution in helping the situation.

Next year's calendar was formulated a long time ago. The time has now come for the RAC to take a long hard look at it and prune it just in case rationing is introduced. They must decide what is important in keeping the industry alive and what is superfluous. This does not mean saying ban all rallies or club meetings or whatever—all of these branches of the sport have their own importance and must be kept alive in a reduced form.

If the RAC were to produce a sensibly trimmed calendar of events to the Government and prepare thoroughly the strong argument against the complete banning of the sport, there is no reason whatsoever for us not having motor sport if there is rationing. Any more rash decisions without opposition, like the one taken last week will deprive thousands of people of their jobs and must not be allowed to happen.

Meanwhile we must reiterate that everyone should adhere to the speed limits recommended, and hope that by doing so we can avert this dreadful crisis.

our cover picture

Although none of the works team finished, the Saabs provided much spectacular action on this year's RAC Rally and before their retirements were well placed. This is Per Eklund/Bo Reinicke jumping on the Glenties stage, near Peebles.

Photo: Hugh Bishop

Yardley-McLaren for Hailwood?

Mike Hailwood to drive a Yardley-McLaren next year? The rumour gathers strength every day but none of the parties were prepared to say anything on Tuesday. Hailwood said "I'm unemployed or rather unemployable—seriously though I have got something fixed up but cannot say what it is."

Martin Cartwright of Yardley said "Hailwood's name has been proposed and he is a good candidate; in fact I'd be very agreeable to it, but if he has signed, nobody's told me."

Peter Hull for McLaren said that he too had heard nothing.

Hailwood split with Surtees "very amicably" while in South Africa recently after what has been a disastrous season results-wise with some very dramatic retirements.

Mike burst back on to the F1 scene in late 1971 when Surtees gave him an F1 ride in the Italian GP. After that Hailwood gave up motor cycles completely and joined Surtees for F1 and F2. He showed tremendous speed in F1 last year and led a couple of early races but again retirements were numerous. However, he did clinch the European F2 championship with the Matchbox Surtees TS10 and this



Mike Hailwood—Yardley Mac?

year was expected to make a really big impact on F1. A number of teams have been after his services and with a reliable and competitive car next year he will undoubtedly be at the top of the tree.

It seems almost certain that Yardley and McLaren will still be together next season. Martin Cartwright said that he was "optimistic" that the differences would be sorted out although at the moment there were still a few points to be agreed upon.

Grovwod Securities taken over

Grovwod Securities, the property, engineering and chemical concern which also owns the four racing circuits: Brands Hatch, Oulton Park, Snetterton and Mallory Park, has been taken over by Eagle Star Insurance. Eagle Star already had a 22.1 per cent holding in Grovwod before the bid which also included the property and house-building group Bernard Sunley Investment Trust, and was worth £71.3 million. The motor sport interest of Grovwod is run by Motor Circuit Developments under the control of John Webb, and John Danny has been running Grovwod during its 16-year build-up programme when its average annual earnings growth record has been 32½ per cent and one of 54 per cent in the past four years. Grovwod's pre-tax profits for the year to December are forecast as rising from £1.9 million to £2.8 million. Eagle Star maintain that both their new acquisitions will continue to be run along current lines.

Esso championship continues

The Esso Uniflo Special Saloon car championship which was held for the first time this season will again be run in 1974. The championship will have 10 rounds next year spread round at Silverstone, Brands Hatch, Mallory Park, Oulton Park, Snetterton and Thruxton. Points scored in all rounds will count towards the championship.

There will be the usual four classes, over 1300 cc, 1001-1300 cc, 851-1000 cc and up to 850 cc. Points will be scored on a 4-3-2-1 basis in each class in all rounds except the final when they will be doubled.

The overall winner of the championship will receive £150 and the Esso Uniflo Trophy, the other class winners £50, second in class £30, third £10, and fourth £5.

The dates of the rounds are: April 15, Silverstone; May 12, Snetterton; May 27, Silverstone; June 16, Brands Hatch; July 7, Thruxton; July 14, Mallory Park; July 28, Silverstone; August 10, Oulton Park; August 26, Silverstone; October 5, Silverstone.

Brise's F3 Mallory appeal dismissed

At the RAC Motor Sport Division on Monday, various appeals and protests were heard. Derek Lawrence's appeal against his disqualification by the stewards of the Croft meeting on October 7th for having an illegal engine was dismissed and the Tribunal confirmed the stewards' action in excluding Lawrence from that BOC round.

Tony Brise's appeal against his disqualification by the stewards of the October Mallory Park Formula 3 International for dangerous driving in forcing Brian Henton on to the grass, was also dismissed and Brise's disqualification stands.

With regards to an incident at Silverstone on September 23rd and Donald MacLeod's protest against another Formula Ford driver, Ato Lawler, fresh evidence showed that Lawler was

guilty of baulking and he was reprimanded by the Tribunal.

Another Formula Ford driver, Frank Hopper, was severely reprimanded for his lack of action during practice for the Brands Hatch International Formula Ford race in October. However, the Tribunal did not find a charge of reckless driving to be proven for some flag signals had been withdrawn by the time Hopper arrived at the scene.

Finally the Tribunal declared that Brian Jordan could not be excluded from the Monoposto Championship despite an engine believed to be over the permitted 1600 cc.

There apparently was an ambiguity in the Monoposto regulations and in such cases the club are at fault and Jordan's protest against his disqualification was allowed.

Speed show looks good

A central display, with racing cars varying from F1 to club racing and from rallying to drag racing, will be one of the main features of the Alexandra Palace Festival of Speed from January 1 to January 6, 1974.

The Marlboro World Championship team will be on display plus at least three F1 cars and GRD and Royale have also booked space. The Dempster Developments International Racing Team also plan to exhibit an exciting new single seater. Various specialist road car manufacturers will also be appearing and there will be plenty of accessory and goodies stalls.

The show, which uses motorised sport as its theme will also have a Miss Festival of Speed title, special competitions and a brand new racing car simulator from DART-GRD.

Bad European Fuji luck

Jean-Pierre Jarier was out of luck in the Fuji Grand Prix held last Friday with the works March-BMW sports car. After qualifying in the middle of the grid he suffered a broken throttle cable as the flag dropped. On his return to London he was very critical of the racing there as there had been some very nasty accidents, one of which resulted in the death of one driver and serious injury to three others.

Guy Edwards was also present in the Barclays Lola and he was involved in a nasty shunt when one of the local Kamukasis turned sharp right in front of him at about 20 mph while the Lola was coming out of a corner at full speed. Luckily Guy escaped unhurt. The race was won by a local Chevron.

The new Osella Abarth 2-litre car was being tested at Casale near Turin last week by Enzo Osella. The semi-monocoque chassis designed by Tomaini is all new while the body is also different from this year's car. Among next year's works drivers will be Vittorio Brambilla and Jean-Louis Lafosse.



Six-month BRSCC ban on Lawrence



Derek Lawrence — banned.

The BRSCC took the unusual step of banning Derek Lawrence from any BRSCC meetings for the next six months. The decision was made when the RAC's Formula Ford eligibility scrutineer declared Lawrence's win-

ning Titan-built engine illegal in the BRSCC Formula Ford Festival, at Snetterton. Commenting on the decision, BRSCC's executive director Peter Browning said, "Lawrence's winning engine was found to be illegal on no fewer than four counts and, having been found illegal at an eligibility check only a few weeks previously, we consider this a case of blatant cheating. The club feels that in addition to the routine exclusion from the results of the Formula Ford Festival, their action of banning Lawrence from BRSCC meetings for six months—in whatever Formula he drives—is fully justified."

Runner-up in the Formula Ford Festival, Donald MacLeod (whose engine was pronounced legal after the eligibility check) has been declared the winner and all other award winners are reclassified accordingly.



Graham Hill was out testing the Lola T370 again at Snetterton last week. This is the first picture of the rear end of the car which features twin bottom parallel links and radius arm and single top link suspension. The oil tank, conforming to the new regulations is forward of the engine under the fared roll-over bar.

Springbok cancelled

The Springbok series has been cancelled. The final decision was made known towards the end of last week and the majority of the 2-litre sports car drivers had returned home at the beginning of this week.

The situation is that the SA government have banned motor racing until the end of February when the position will be reviewed.

Alex Blignaut, the man who organises all the major races in the country is due to arrive in Europe next week to negotiate GP entries for the race which is

due to be held on March 3. This, of course, leaves very little time for any arrangements to be made and the general feeling is that the race will probably be held later in the year.

The ban until the end of February of course means that there will be no chance for the teams to use Kyalami as a test track as they have done in the past. Just recently John Surtees has had to return from testing his new F1 prototype because of the ban, although it took a visit to the local police station before he could be convinced.

Petrol crisis: the problems of the sport

The introduction of petrol coupons and severe cutbacks on the use of petrol throughout Europe and America, makes the outlook on motor sport for the coming months extremely bleak. As this is the "off-season," the motor racing calendar has hardly suffered serious setbacks as yet, apart from the cancellation of the Springbok series.

However, the prospects for 1974 do not look at all good. There seems little hope that motor racing would be allowed to continue as normal, while restrictions are placed on weekend motoring and the opinion from the motor industry at present is that restrictions could last for at least 18 months.

Already the continuation of certain forms of motor sport in this country is provoking public alarm. Last Sunday's Brands Hatch meeting, of little significance to the sport or the circuit owners, came in for attack and we have had stories of circuits receiving complaints from "locals" when cars are allowed to practise during the week. The obvious fact that the fuel consumed in motor sport would make little or no difference to the situation will not stop the outcry from the public who are being asked to cut out unessential motoring. But the question is, should we call a total stop to all forms of motor sport now until March in the hope such popular action would mean our sport would be favourably looked upon at that time?

Commenting on the situation, Ford of Europe's vice-president, public affairs, Walter Hayes, said, "If people who control sport decide that it should stop, we will naturally conform to that decision. However, we propose to continue with our winter development programme simply

because it is a basic contribution to the production vehicles." Therefore, so far as Ford is concerned, the situation is "stand down to total readiness." Mr Hayes added that Ford took the same view on motor racing. But since racing formed a greater part of the British economy than it did in any other European country—and was a vital overseas currency earner—not only the sport but the whole British motor industry was at risk in the long term.

It is the duty of the RAC Motorsport Division to safeguard the interests of motor sport in this country. Currently there is so little motor sport that more fuel is consumed by spectators travelling by car to watch football matches than is used in motor sport. However, when next season's calendar comes into operation, it's imperative that the governing body keep as much of it intact as possible, particularly the events which mean the most to the large motor sporting industry.

Internationally, the banning of Sunday driving will obviously create problems for as long as it is implemented. Apparently in Italy Alfa Romeo are to end involvement in all competitions and Ferrari, amongst others, are expected to follow suit. The position in South Africa is made clear elsewhere in Pit and Paddock. In respect of international motor sport, one hopes the FIA are taking appropriate action to at least keep the FIA's world championship rounds to schedule as far as possible.

One thing is certain as soon as the duration of these petrol restrictions becomes apparent, motor sporting bodies must be able to present a strong enough case to keep the motor sporting industry intact.

CanAm fuel limits finally announced

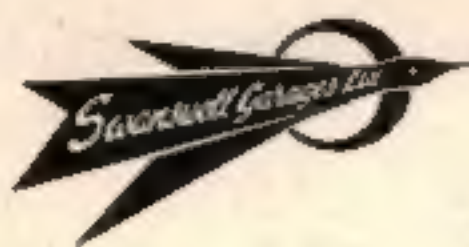
The SCCA finally announced the CanAm regulations for 1974 last week. As they indicated in an earlier statement, a fuel limitation has been introduced while the two-race format will continue.

A maximum of 73 US gallons of fuel will be allowed for each competing car in all the FIA-recognised CanAm championship rounds. The limitation will be allocated in the following manner: 25 gallons of on-board fuel for use in the 75-mile CanAm sprint races and 41 gallons for the 125-mile Canadian-American Challenge Cup races, with an additional seven gallons allowed

for refuelling purposes.

The auxiliary supply will be maintained in a standardised, dry-break container and may be added by race crews during either the 75-mile sprint or 125-mile CanAm race during a refuelling pit stop only.

Competing cars will be presented at a fuelling site prior to each 75-mile sprint and 125-mile CanAm race to receive the specified fuel allocation. Each race will be preceded by one pace lap. In the event of additional pace laps being necessary, each extra lap will be considered part of the overall race length.



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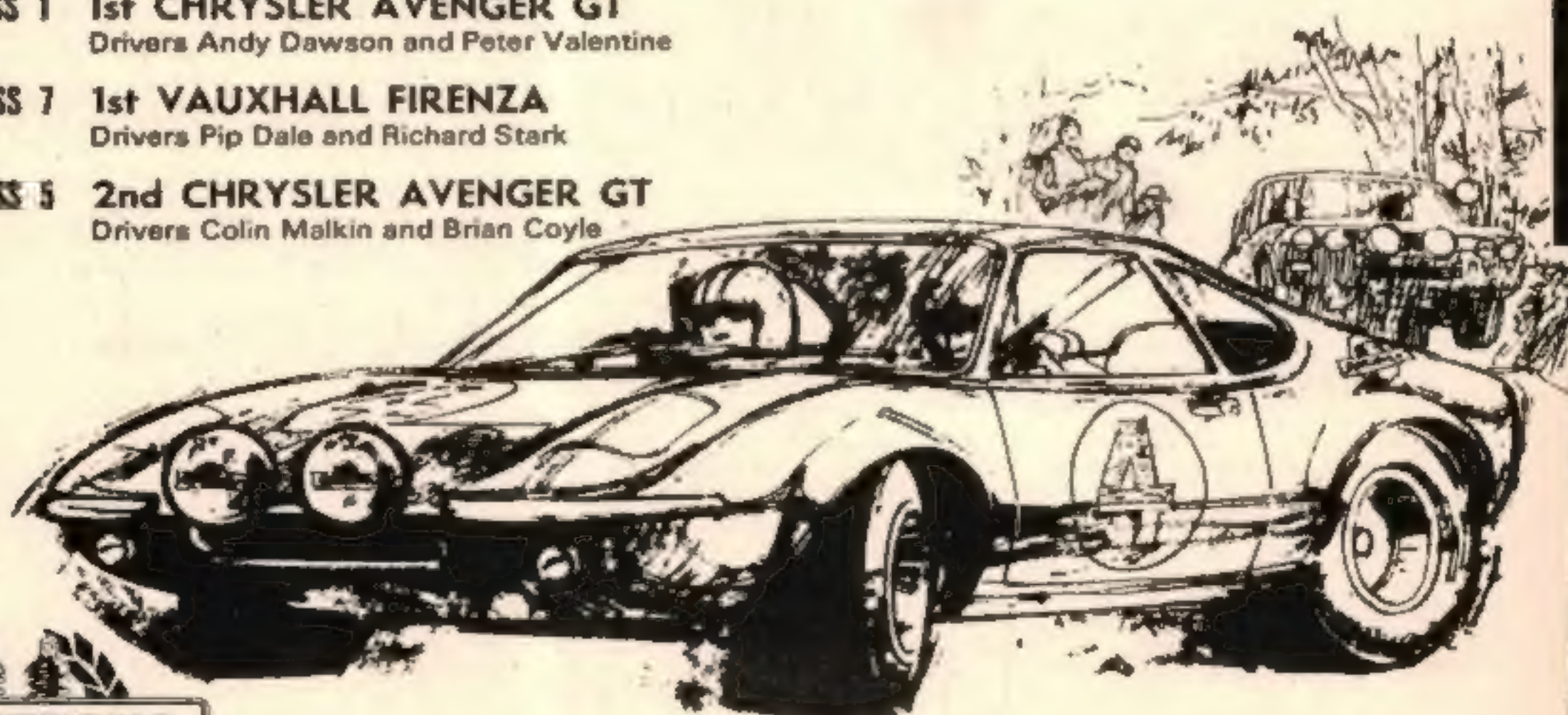
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Pit and Paddock



Emerson Fittipaldi (left) with Philip Mortyn (centre), Nina's husband, Nina Rindt and Natasha Rindt at the opening of the show in Vienna last week.

Jochen Rindt Show

Emerson Fittipaldi opened the ninth Jochen Rindt Show in Vienna last week and described it as the best racing car show he had ever seen. "I'm so happy that Nina continues with this exhibition that meant so much to Jochen."

Among the exhibits were Emerson's JPS, Jackie Stewart's championship-winning Tyrrell, Denny Hulme's McLaren M23 (still in Yardley colours) and a Ferrari 312B2 which was loaned by Jacky Ickx whose personal collection now includes a B1, B2 and 312P.

Bernie Ecclestone sent along the Brabham BT43 F5000 car which was being shown in public for the first time, while also there was Howden Ganley's Iso-Marlboro and a replica Marlboro-BRM P180.

The star of the show, however, was Mark Donohue's all-

conquering CanAm Porsche 917. Other sports cars were McLaren CanAm car and the Gulf Mirage sports car and the Martini Porsche Carrera.

The Lancia-Marlboro Stratos was one of the few rally cars on view and it was confirmed that the car would be used for the European GT Championship next season with Mike Parkes in charge of the development.

There were many other exhibits including big stands from Ford and BMW while many personalities were present. Ickx was busy pulling Fittipaldi's leg about leaving Lotus for McLaren. Emerson confided that he would be testing an all white McLaren at Ricard in December while Ickx replied that he would be there at the same time in the all-black Lotus—they wondered if this was how the rumour regarding Black and White (whisky) becoming involved started.

March tests

After a rather miserable season in F1 this year, Jean-Pierre Jarier is very confident of a much more competitive time next season. Robin Herd's new design should be completed in a couple of weeks and testing will start in earnest.

Recently Jarier and Andy Sutcliffe have been testing Mike Beuttler's 731G fitted with new Girling brakes and Jarier has been a second quicker round Goodwood with the new set-up than he managed all last season. It seems likely that March will run two works cars in F1 next season probably with Mike Beuttler driving the second.

Hans Stuck was at Silverstone last week testing the latest March-BMW F2 car, which Sutcliffe has also been driving, fitted with Lotus 74 (Texaco Star) type radiators.

Italian awards

The Autosport awards given by the Italian weekly magazine were presented in Bologna last Tuesday. The Golden Helmet goes to Jackie Stewart while the silver and bronze awards were taken by Ronnie Peterson and James Hunt.

Italian drivers taking awards were Vittorio Brambilla, Gabriella Serbelli and Lella Lombardi.

Other special awards went to Matra "for having bestowed on the championship makes an exciting alternative"; McLaren "for having honoured Bruce's unquenchable spirit with an ever increasing sporting vitality in F1"; to Lord Hesketh "for having shown up the value of sponsorship based only on enthusiasm in the F1 world" and to David Purley "for his desperate effort of sporting and human generosity, which confirms that racing is a choice born of courage."

Brands Hatch

The Rochester and Tunbridge Wells MCs combine to put on this Sunday's race meeting at Brands Hatch. The meeting, which has eight events (including two for karts), starts at 1.30. Races will be for saloons of all sizes, FF, modsports, libre cars and Shellsport Mexicos. Among the names entered are Jenny Dell, Colin Selvege, Tim Dodwell, Syd Fox, Gerry Marshall, Colin Folwell, Roger Saunders, Mo Mendham, Fergus Tait and Philip Guerola.

The first Clubman's Super Sports Dinner-Dance was held at the Skyline Hotel near Heathrow last Friday. The Register presented a painting to Ray Cunningham of Shell to mark their four years of sponsoring the formula while Frank Sytner, the Tricentrol Championship winner, was given a painting of the fingernail he broke while pushing his car to scrutineering in Ireland—the only time he was seen to touch it.

There was a miniature Formula 1 race on the Silverstone Grand Prix circuit last Tuesday. Seen testing were Jody Scheckter (Tyrrell), George Pollmer (Shadow), Graham Hill (Lola), and Niki Lauda, Tim Schenken and Derek Bell in BRMs.

Tricentrol Cars are running a "Ford on Show" week from December 8 to December 15 at their Gascoyne Way, Hertford premises. Each night of the week is devoted to a special feature and between 7 pm and 10 pm on Tuesday, December 11 it's a Motor Club night, to which have been invited all the local clubs. There'll be film shows, a pit-stop competition, and a forum consisting of Roger Clark, Tony Mason, Gerry Marshall and Mick Hill. Anybody is welcome and Tricentrol are supplying free beer.

Johnny Gerber arrived back in Britain last week after a holiday in his native Mexico. He was distressed to discover that he had been accused of not returning the Jack Brabham FF Trophy in time for the World Cup race at Brands Hatch. He claims he was not informed when to return it but has now done so.

CATCHPOLE

By Barry Foley



THE FABULOUS VAN DIEMEN FA 73 FORMULA FORD



Don MacLeod excelled again at the very wet Silverstone meeting last weekend.

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Unfair advantages over Mr Vandervell!

My son brought home a copy of your magazine when he came back from the RAC Rally. I started to read it and I was very interested in the interview with that famous racing driver, Colin Vandervell.

Before he went to the RAC Rally, I had told my son not to practice for the rally but in the few days that he was in England before the start of the rally, he managed to remember all the special stages by heart and for this he has had a telling off especially after he went off the road despite such cheating because of his poor memory. Also of course he had a better engine, gearbox, lights, seats, tyres, etc. than that famous Mr Vandervell which gave him an unfair advantage which I assure you will not happen again.

I was surprised that a reputable magazine like yours misquoted Mr Vandervell by saying that he expected to get into the first ten on special stages as I am quite sure that he must have meant the first hundred. Anyway, I have told my son that in future he must give Mr Vandervell a fair chance of beating him or I will take his rally car away and make him drive a nasty little racing car.

To close, I sincerely wish Mr Vandervell all the success he obviously thinks he should have in rallying and commiserate with him for all the success he hasn't had in racing.
YORK.

MRS ALLEN (MARKKU'S MUM).

Vandervell for RAC

Having read your excellent interview with Colin Vandervell, may I put forward a suggestion that Colin should be appointed as an adviser to the RAC in connection with the scrutiny of engines at club level. I, for one, having competed in Formula Ford this year, am disgusted by the way in which people have been blatantly cheating. How can a driver hope to compete on equal terms when other drivers run bent motors?

The RAC do not seem to mind what happens at tracks like Lydden and small clubbies, so a driver like Colin who knows what the problems are could help sort out this nasty situation.

MARDEN, KENT.

J. KIRK.

RAC must strip more

Congratulations on Mike Doodson's interview with Colin Vandervell. He may be unpopular but he has shown more guts than any other driver in trying to make sure motors are legal.

I hope to do Atlantic next year but unfortunately I just do not have the inclination to protest another competitor's engine even if I think it is illegal and anyway — why should I?

Why don't the RAC inspect motors at random more often? This must be in the interests of all concerned.
LONDON, SW11.

P. LEADBETTER.

Wet-weather "bend"

This letter refers to the suggestions made by Max Mosley in his *Purely Personal* comments in your issue of November 15. There is considerable merit in the evolution of the motor car and in motor racing for the circuits to be changed in order to slow down the speed of Formula 1 cars today. One idea that is worth renovating at this time would meet Max Mosley's points and also make a considerable contribution towards the development of the motor car and in future safety.

I refer to the idea of the wet corner on motor racing circuits whereby the approach to one corner, the corner and the exit from that corner, be permanently sprayed with water thus making it essential that an all-purpose tyre be used (the exception being

when the whole course is wet!) This would have the advantage of making it necessary to have an all-purpose tyre for motor racing and it may well have the effect that Mr Mosley argues cogently for in your November 15 issue.

Development of the car would be enhanced since tyres on Formula 1 cars have become slightly ridiculous and out of touch with everyday motoring. I accept the point that motor racing has made significant contributions to the development of the tyre but feel that future development could well be channelled into an all-purpose tyre — after all, Aunt Mary can't look out of her window each morning and decide, having looked at the weather, which set of tyres she is going to use that day. Neither can I!

Returning to the motor racing scene the corner chosen could be a good spectator scene — I am certain that Silverstone circuit would not choose Woodcote — and appropriate extra stand facilities might well be constructed. Tom Wheatcroft at Donnington might be the leader!

This is not a new idea but like many ideas it can only be really purposefully adopted at the right time. I think that we are fast approaching that time and I think it would meet most of the points — both practical and financial — that Max Mosley raises.

MAIDENHEAD, BERKS.

N. E. RAYCLIFFE,

(Managing Director,
Vandervell Products Limited).

Safety in trials

Messrs A. J. Brunning and J. H. Piddock sent me a copy of the letter they have sent to you regarding sporting trials.

I must say, first and foremost, that my committee are very concerned with safety in sporting trials and I am constantly writing to clubs whenever dangerous hills are used. Unfortunately, in some cases, trials are organised as a competition between the organisers and the competitors, i.e. the organisers believe that they have, by any means, to stop trials cars climbing hills which is not the purpose of the exercise. The trial should be a competition between the competitors and it is quite easy to find a winner and a loser without using dangerous or impossible sections. Ideally, the winner should lose no marks with the second probably two marks behind.

Your correspondents mention the change from mud and snow tyres. This change was made mainly in the interests of safety, the amazing thing is that experience has shown that the road radials do, in fact, climb hills better than the mud and snow tyres ever did. The committee are quite certain, however, that where steep cambers are used the present radial tyre is far safer.

Let me re-write their last paragraph: "Please let us have climbs which are a test of ability and not nerve and cut out the dangerous ones." This I would support wholeheartedly.

HOLLYWOOD, BIRMINGHAM.

RON KEMP,

(Secretary,

BTRDA Trials Committee.)

Most efficient overall?

Mr D. W. Spice's letter suggesting that Dupont's laboratory test of their own product, Nomex, is nothing more than an advertising exercise, need a reply, if only for his own enlightenment.

In fairness to Autosport and the several types of flame-resistant materials in current use for racing overalls, it should be appreciated that the *Time* in report dealt only with Nomex because, as was made clear, our own conclusions are that it is the best and therefore we use it exclusively for overalls. Please note also that Dupont have given the results achieved by the Nomex layer samples which we submitted to them, for comparison with their own earlier tests of Nomex in various weaves and textures in combination with each

other; this was not intended to be general tests of all other materials.

We do agree with Mr Spice that it would be useful to compare the figures achieved by the various materials under identical test conditions, and would welcome an International Standard to do just this; we have carried out numerous tests of those fabrics available, both on their own and in combination with Nomex and each other, and could not better the all-Nomex system which we use for our three-layer suit. Unlike Mr Spice, we do not have, or wish for, an agency or sole representation for any manufacturer, which would demand our loyalty to one product and prevent our acceptance of new and better materials should they appear.

The petrol-soaked glove makes an impressive demonstration, and the times claimed by your correspondent are undoubtedly correct; he would of course achieve similar results, equally spectacular, with other materials, and one has only to watch petrol vapour burning on the surface of water or wood, or the wick of a cigarette lighter, to see why. For our demonstrations we prefer to apply a steady, concentrated flame — a candle in fact; layers of the test material are wrapped round the hand and a stop-watch used to ascertain the "Ouch" delay. At the time of our 90-odd tests we had a fairly high throughput of junior staff.

However, we do accept that Dupont with multi-million dollar laboratory facilities conduct more accurate experiments, and if they do it all for publicity only they have pulled in some discerning customers — among them military forces around the world, aerospace programmers, international industrial protection and fire services, plus things you don't think about like Concorde's upholstery.

But just in case they have all been misled, we're going to continue burning the candle — midnight and otherwise.

LONDON, W1.

PETE ATKINS & CHRIS STEYNE.

Formula One Ltd.

A poor show

I enclose a copy of a letter which I have recently sent to the BBC which is self-explanatory. "I feel compelled, both as a motor sport enthusiast and also a member of the Guild of Motoring Writers, to write and complain most vociferously about the way your Rally Special (BBC2) on Wednesday, November 21, 1973, was handled."

First, in Cliff Michelmore you have a person who may be a competent presenter of current affairs programmes, but who, regrettably it would appear, knows little or nothing about the subject of motor sport. Why, oh why, cannot we have someone who is conversant with motor sport. After all, people of the calibre of Raymond Baxter, Robin Richards, Gordon Wilkins, Michael Frostick and Eric Tobitt would have been most acceptable to the viewing public as these names are synonymous with motor sport.

What was the subject matter of this particular programme? Was it a chat show? Was it a show on the RAC Rally? Was it a show on the World Cup Rally? Was it a show on rallying in general. Or was it Come Dancing? Was it a show at all?

It was particularly annoying that a show billed as the RAC Rally should be void of action, with the exception of about five minutes, during the course of the 35-minute programme.

Was this merely an exercise for the outside broadcast teams, technicians, electricians, producers, etc. and Cliff Michelmore, or was it a serious attempt to portray the World's greatest rally on television?

If it was the latter, you have my deepest sympathy for one of your greatest failures.

I wonder have the BBC heard of the Trade Descriptions Act?

OCHAN, ISLE OF MAN.

C. D. BAIRD.



Although not to be used for racing again, Montlhéry will still be the venue of important work in the development of production cars.

End of an era with the closure of Montlhéry

JOHN BOLSTER looks into the inglorious past of the famous French track

The most famous track in the world, since the demise of Brooklands, will never see another race. Immensely valuable as a testing circuit, and ideally placed, particularly in relation to the Renault and Citroën factories, Montlhéry will continue to work—all day, every day—in development of production cars. Busy and prosperous, the famous old concrete saucer will be kept in excellent repair. The road circuit, too, will be meticulously maintained, except where a few bumps are considered advantageous for suspension tests. But alas, the glorious racing days are over, for ever!

The reasons are very simple to understand, however deeply one feels about it. Although the circuit was considered safe for Mercedes-Benz and Auto-Union to mix it in Grand Prix races, it would need some alterations for even the mildest cars to be raced there in future. The cost would not be great but the owners are just not interested. Racing is more trouble than it's worth to them, especially as the track is largely financed by the French motor industry.

Of recent years, there had been several appalling accidents, some of which had expensive legal repercussions. In particular, a Talbot travelling at 140 mph through a curve was baulked by the negligence of a slow driver. The Talbot left the road, killing its driver instantly, and eventually landed on a public footpath, where it tragically brought about the death of a boy who was not even watching the racing. That was nearly the end of Montlhéry and though it is too painful to cite further examples, in which one lost friends, it is understandable that the management of the Autodrome are now less enthusiastic about the sport.

It is curious, too, that Montlhéry never drew the crowds. Situated just outside Paris, where every Frenchman thinks he is a racing driver, the circuit is connected to the *Périphérique* by a fast, direct road. It's not much farther than Orly airport, yet few people bothered to go. I have never seen the place really full and I have photographs of historic Grand Prix races taking place before half-empty grandstands. Perhaps we shall never know why.

Yet, Montlhéry was great. It was opened in 1924 and in 1925 the French Grand Prix was held there. It was won by a French car,

too, a Delage driven by Benoist and Divo. Thereafter, the ACF held their famous race there eight times, and there were many other important events, as well as what might now be called Club races.

Looking down the list of winners, it is interesting to see that only French cars won races of any importance until August, 1927, when the mistake was made of running a 24-hour race. The result was a foregone conclusion, for this was the era of the great green Bentleys at Le Mans. Frank Clement and George Duller carried it off with the only Bentley entered, a 4½-litre, though they were delayed by a nasty fire in the pits. I'm told that patriotism is now a dirty word, but it still makes my heart beat at 3500 rpm.

Afterwards, long-distance races became quite fashionable and even the *Boi d'Or*, that incredible 24-hour frolic, eventually came in from the Forest of St Germain. However, the

gorse bushes of the Autodrome provided meagre shelter for a *fête champêtre*.

Without doubt, record-breaking was the most exciting activity at Montlhéry. Nowadays, most records have been pushed up to such speeds that it is necessary to make an expedition to a desert to beat them. In the 1920s and early 30s, it was still possible to take anything but the land speed record on a banked track. Brooklands was excessively hard on tyres as speeds went over 120 mph, but Montlhéry, though tricky, could contain still higher speeds.

Some records were of immensely long duration, notably those of the Citroën, *La Petite Rosalie*. She circulated for days, weeks, and months, and when the circuit was regained for the Grand Prix, she was locked up under seals, but as soon as the race was over, the stopwatches were clicked anew and *Rosalie* was again circulating.

It will be understood that only the circular banked track was used for records. Though a section of the banking, and the run past the pits and grandstands, was combined with the road circuit for the big races, the two are normally separate and used as such for ordinary testing. It needs enormous courage and a lot of skill to drive really fast round the banking and high-speed record-breaking was really pretty dangerous.

Record-breaking was a profession and some drivers lived by it. Car manufacturers used records for advertising while the fuel, oil and

"Williams," the great Anglo-French driver, on the Montlhéry road circuit in a 4-litre 12-cylinder Sunbeam, running as *d Talbot* on this occasion.



accessory companies had fixed bonus rates—you did not break records by too great a margin for, after one of your rivals had taken them from you, it was necessary to break them again to get paid twice.

Most Grand Prix cars were too lightly constructed for Montlhéry, as the suspension usually bottomed or broke, due to the unnatural loads caused by centrifugal force. Successful long-distance record cars therefore generally had chassis of lorry-like construction. Sleeve-valve engines were popular, too, their high-speed reliability resulting in their adoption for aircraft use.

The two records which were desired above all others were not mere class records, but the unlimited one-hour and 24-hour figures. The 24-hour was taken as early as 1926 by a 9-litre Renault—basically a touring chassis with a single seater saloon body—at 107.9 mph, including changing tyres at one-hour intervals. In the next year, the 8-litre sleeve-valve Voisin put it up to 113.4 mph. Subsequently, John Cobb took the Napier-Railton to Montlhéry with a team of drivers, in an attempt to average 120 mph for a day and a night. When success seemed certain, Freddie Dixon lost control of the big aero-engined car and once again a record attempt ended in a crash.

As for the hour, it was first put over 120 mph by a sports sleeve-valve Panhard. Ernest Eldridge achieved a resounding 126.59 mph, also in 1926, driving an Indianapolis-type Miller, which was taken away from him by the inevitable Voisin at 126.35 mph. Subsequent Voisin records were curtailed by a very bad accident.

Then, in 1932, our own George Eyston, took out the greatest record driver of all time, pooped the 8 litre sleeve-valve Panhard. This was derived from quite an elderly touring car, a chassis normally fitted with seven-seater limousine coachwork, but in this case carrying a narrow and incomparably beautiful single-seater, planked with wood like a boat. After a tense wrestling match, George put 130.73 miles into the hour.

Montlhéry was getting a bit small for such larks, and Count Czapkowski went to Avus with his big Bugatti to take the coveted honour, at 132.87 mph. To everyone's surprise, Panhard's dusted down their venerable monster, fitted it with Dunlop tyres, and sent it to Montlhéry for the last time, with a slightly restyled bonnet to resemble the current production models. Capt. G. E. T. Eyston was not found wanting and he risked everything to achieve the decimal advantage of 133.01 mph. The hour would never again be taken on a banked track.

The greatest phenomenon at Montlhéry was Gwenda Hawkes. She had a front-drive Miller racing car which her husband, Douglas Hawkes of Brooklands fame, had reconstructed so frequently that few Miller parts remained. As the work was done in the factory where he built the Derby cars, the single-seater became the Derby-Miller and then the Derby Special.

This front-drive car was capable of lapping Montlhéry faster than any Grand Prix car could do it. Its straight-eight engine was of only 1.6-litre capacity and its two-speed gearbox and centrifugal supercharger made slow standing starts unavoidable. Nevertheless, it took record after record, often at speeds of over 140 mph, which few orthodox cars of much greater power could approach on the saucer Gwenda took the lap record repeatedly. Finally at 147.79 mph.

In 1939, Raymond Sommer tried to beat this speed with a 3-litre Grand Prix Alfa Romeo. Failing, he drank several glasses of Scotch, gritted his teeth, and made the do-or-die attempt of all time. Leaping and caving on the very rim of the banking, the Alfa screamed round while strong men were physically sick. He took the record by 0.6 mph and I hope nobody will ever try to equal it.

Banked tracks are treacherous and I have myself had moments on Montlhéry which I would rather forget. Unsuitable for modern racing, such tracks are nevertheless indispensable for much serious testing. The road circuit, too, has the hills and bumps of a genuine cross-country route and has none of the artificial quality of modern racing venues.

As for racing, a new Paris circuit is



A straw bale chicane was installed to slow cars down off the banking after a serious accident in 1967 (above). The P2 Alfa Romeo in which Ascari (father of Alberto Ascari) was killed at Montlhéry in the French GP.



planned just north of the capital, Jabby Crombac tells me. An area has been found where unlimited noise is permitted, as it is close to the runways where aircraft take off. Most of the surroundings of Paris are scheduled as silence zones, so this is of extreme importance. Let us hope that the Parisians will overcome their traditional indifference to motor racing.

Now that we have lost Brooklands, I hope that Montlhéry will be preserved for all time and that I shall be permitted to go on using it for my tests of French cars. It is sad indeed that we shall see no more races there but I hope, from time to time, to use that ancient banking as a background for my photographs, if only as a reminder of some stirring deeds by brave drivers.

Offenstadt's F3 car on the infamous high Montlhéry banking.



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The new Alfaud ti though of more sporting shape is of substantially similar dimensions to the saloon, and carries a front spoiler and upturned tail.

NEW CARS

More power and luxury in the Alfasud ti

The Alfasud saloon is a very roomy 4-door car with front-wheel drive. Possessed of exceptional roadholding and stability, it has an engine of less than 1200 cc which, perhaps, scarcely exercises these qualities to the full.

To us, a bigger engine would seem an obvious choice, but in Italy such things as car tax, insurance, and autostrada tolls would be substantially increased if the cylinder capacity were enlarged, in any case, the car would then clash with other Alfa Romeo models. So, the new sporting version must retain the existing engine size, relying on tuning and development work on the unit, plus a new 2-door body of lower drag and less weight, to give a sensible increase in performance. Above all, a new close-ratio 5-speed gearbox permits the keen driver to exploit the full possibilities.

Having suffered the necessary cholera jabs—"no alcohol for 24 hours," said the nurse—I jetted to Naples, where the Alfasud is built in a large new factory. I had been critical of the lack of torque of the saloon and I was most interested to see whether or not the claimed improvement in this respect was effective.

The new ti, though of more sporting shape, is of substantially similar dimensions to the saloon, with as much room in the rear seats. In contrast to the rather plain interior of the 4-door model, the coupé is quite luxurious, with fitted carpets and a fine display of proper round instruments. The angle of the steering column is adjustable and the seats are very comfortable. The body carries the front spoiler and upturned tail which are now becoming fashionable. Four quartz-haline lights permit high speeds at night.

The rest of the design follows that of the saloon closely. The very short flat-four engine is mounted ahead of the front-wheel drive-shafts, with the gearbox and final drive behind it, carrying the inboard disc brakes. A girder of light alloy extends rearward and is supported on a suitably distant flexible mounting while at the same time providing a pivot point for the remote control gearlever, thus eliminating relative motion. There is MacPherson front suspension with rack and pinion steering while a dead axle on Watt's linkages supports the rear end.

The main alterations to the engine consist of new camshafts and a twin-choke Weber carburettor, though there has been other detail development, one understands. There is a gain of 5 bhp at the same peak speed of 6000 rpm but, much more important, there is quite a useful improvement in torque at reduced revolutions, the maximum now occurring at 3200 rpm instead of 3500 rpm.

On the road, the new car is altogether more refined than its predecessor. In spite of developing more power, the engine is certainly quieter and perhaps even smoother; the twin-choke Weber carburettor has virtually eliminated the previous flat spot. The greater torque results in a much better feeling of responsiveness and there is now useful acceleration on the higher gears.

Fifth is not a true overdrive, being only slightly higher geared than top in the four-speed box. As first gear is the same in both boxes, it will be realised that the intermediates give a much closer spread of ratios. I

reached an indicated 90 mph in fourth at 6200 rpm on the rev counter, which is where the red section begins. Though the engine can easily go much higher, the best performance is achieved by changing up at this speed, I found.

I reached an indicated 106 mph on the level and 112 mph on a downgrade so, allowing for the usual speedometer slattery, the manufacturer's claim of 100 mph would seem to be pretty accurate. I shall, of course, time the car in both directions when I carry out a full road test. However, I was able to drive on roads varying from autostrada to winding mountain by-ways, with all sorts of

The car corners very well indeed, with a minimum of roll, the wide track and generous tyre section paying dividends. Though there is some understeer, this is moderate for a front-drive car and the steering is sufficiently sensitive to encourage the driver to throw the machine around. The ride is flat, with no pitching, and though the suspension does not feel soft, bad bumps are well absorbed. Great trouble has been taken to insulate the body from road noises, which has been most successful, and the superior balance of the flat-four engine, compared with an in-line unit, assists in eliminating drumming of the panels. The body shape ensures a low level of wind noise.

The gear change is excellent, with a lever biased towards third and fourth, while fifth is forward and out to the right, as in the larger Alfa Romeo models. I can remember little about the brakes, which proves that they must be very well behaved or I would have given them some black marks. The pedals are well arranged for heel-and-toe, which allows the 5-speed gearbox to be enjoyed to the full.

The Alfasud ti is livelier, more flexible, and faster than the standard saloon, plus an excellent 5-speed gearbox. All this is likely to cost at least an extra £150, which will make it a rather costly 1200 cc car, though a very attractive one.

JOHN BOLSTER

SPECIFICATION AND PERFORMANCE DATA

Car tested: Alfa Romeo Alfasud ti 2-door coupé
 Engine: Four cylinders horizontally opposed, 80 mm x 54 mm (1166 cc) Compression ratio 9 to 1 88 bhp at 6000 rpm One battery-driven overhead camshaft per head
 Transmission: Single dry plate clutch 5-speed all-synchromesh gearbox with central remote control ratios 0.931, 1.115, 1.434, 2.042, and 3.343 to 1 Hypoid final drive, ratio 4.11 to 1
 Chassis: Combined steel body and chassis Independent front suspension by coil spring and damper struts, lower wishbones, and anti-roll bar Rack and pinion steering Dead rear axle on Watt's linkage and Panhard rod with coil springs and telescopic dampers Servo-assisted disc circuit disc brakes, inboard in front, 80 mm disc wheels fitted 165/70 SR13 tyres
 Equipment: 12 volt lighting and starting Speedometer Rev counter Oil pressure water temperature, and fuel gauges Heating demisting and ventilation system Windscreen wipers and washers Parking direction indicators Cigar lighter Reversing light
 Dimensions: Wheelbase 81 1/4 in Track (front) 48 5/8 in, (rear) 48 5/8 in Overall length 124 10 1/4 in Width 54 1/2 in Weight 15 cwt 103 lb
 Performance: Maximum speed 100 mph (maker's figure) Speeds in gear: Fourth 90 mph 4th 72 mph, Second 50 mph, First 29 mph (speedometer readings)

The ti is quite luxurious with fitted carpets and a fine display of proper round instruments.



Adrian Boyd: Folk hero

By IAN SADLER

IS: First off, what will be your programme for next year now that you have a second car with the ex-Roger Clark Escort LVX 942J?

AB: We will be using LVX for forest events, nationals and internationals. There may also be a possibility of tackling some continental events. The Sherry and TAP have been discussed but we are not really definite on anything yet. The old car will be kept for tarmac rallies.

IS: What is your driving preference—loose or surfaced events?

AB: I much prefer tarmac but it is a bit difficult in that the speeds are so high. I don't personally find it difficult but it can frighten people off. If you have an accident it's usually a big one, as I found out on the Manx last year. Beatty always found it difficult to get used to the extra speed of tarmac when we did the Texaco after the Scottish Rally. It always took him a few stages to settle down to the extra speed the car was going at. I think I like tarmac best because I've been brought up with it and consequently I am used to it. I am beginning to like loose surface stages now though I didn't like them in the beginning because they were very hard on the car. I could do a Circuit of Ireland and unless I hit something I knew that the car wasn't going to be damaged. It wasn't going to suffer with suspension and so on and you could do a complete Circuit and still have a good car

at the end, with the Scottish Rally it would be different. Whenever I was owning the car and paying my own way I would pick the tarmac events as it was cheaper for me. Now it is all paid for and I am beginning to like forest events equally to tarmac.

IS: The Escort is the most popular and successful rally car, do you see anything to challenge it?

AB: There was a time when I thought the two-door Vixi would have had a go if Vauxhall had been keen enough. I think it is a car that could have beaten the Escort if it had received the proper development for rallying. As for the Porsches here—we have terrible trouble with the Carreras but this is because of our tarmac events. With BMWs too we have three makes which figure strongly whereas in the rest of Britain there is only the Escort. The tarmac events are much closer to racing. It's half way between racing and rallying. The BMWs used last year were lightweight cars very much cut away; they did take forests though they hopped about all over the place but suited tarmac very well.

IS: Have you ever wished to drive any other make of car?

AB: I started with Fords and other cars and on the Circuit in 1967, '68 and '69 I drove an ex-works Mini Cooper "S" though not on a lot else. Then I drove an Escort and from '70 onwards that's all I've driven. There are many



times I'd have liked to drive something else—especially a good Porsche, I don't really know why.

IS: If you had a totally free choice next year what would you like to have a go with?

AB: If I had a free choice I'd like to try the GT70—it hasn't really proved itself up until now but it should be a good car. I always like a challenge; everyone is driving Porsches now so I'd like to have a go with something a bit different for tarmac events. With my commitments it has to be a Ford as we know it and it really can't be anything else.

IS: If you had the past five years again would you have, with hindsight, wished to have entered any different events; and to

Below: Boyd on the circuit. Across: The rhd converted car on the Scottish.



what extent do your business commitments dictate the rallying you do?

AB: Business-wise it's not bad because it is a family concern and I have brothers and so on who can do my job whenever I'm not here. Looking back, I've been rallying for 15 years and knowing what I know now I would have had a go to try to get to the top more quickly. With me it has been, until the last couple of years, a question of finance and a case of doing what has appeared to be most sensible. I have been depending on a certain amount of prize money to keep me going so I have been choosing events carefully—the ones best suited financially. Obviously I should have been doing a lot more events but it just wasn't on before.

IS: Which driver do you rate most and for what events?

AB: Since the Porsche Carrera came about on a tarmac event the man that I really fear is Cahal Curley. Every time we have been out this year it has always been a real battle. I've been lucky to finish all events. Cahal's car was new at the beginning of the year and was completely reliable the whole year through, whereas my car was giving trouble on and off, but we really did have three or four good battles this year where we both finished first and second.

IS: Are tarmac stages tougher on transmissions than forest?

AB: It depends on the way you drive the car. Obviously you are getting a lot more grip on tarmac. A lot of drivers don't lift off whenever they go over jumps and they are landing with full power on. With tyres gripping so well these days something is bound to give on tarmac. I always try to lift off when the car takes off and land on a trailing

throttle. A tarmac event is bound to be harder on transmission, though if you treat it carefully it will be much more reliable.

IS: So really it's not obviously harder on the car so long as you drive for the situation—but is there a special skill to tarmac driving? Many forest-only drivers are never really confident or quick on tarmac.

AB: I think all this depends on the way you have progressed through motor sport. The big thing over here is auto tests and most of those are tarmac. When I started in 1960 the Circuit of Ireland was half autotests and half navigation. I think the autotests teach you great car control. You get to know just how the car brakes on tar—how to throw the car—how it slides and all at low speeds which is reasonably safe. It teaches you great judgment. I went on from that and at the same time, in fact, with the same car, a Sprite, I entered the odd hillclimb and race and that of course was all tarmac as well. So when I started to rally really all the events I entered were on tar so I grew up to know and like it. It's only recently, within the past couple of years, that I have had a real go at the forests. Many other drivers have gone about it the other way and have the majority of their experience on loose

IS: Quite a few good road drivers don't seem to like driving in forests—at least they seem to steer clear of stage events. You don't seem to have had any doubts. The Scottish last year I thought was a good example when you had a hum-ding battle right through with Andrew Cowan.

AB: Yes, the Scottish was the first time that I completely adapted to forests. I think this development, as far as my driving is concerned, was held back for a year or so because the previous year I had a left hand drive Escort and everyone told me that Roger could drive left hand drives. It's a problem—all these top drivers can adapt so easily—I think Ford told me that. I tried for a year to learn to drive left hand drives and I was never happy with it. It just never clicked properly. I think that if I had had that year in a right hand drive car I would be further on as far as forest driving is concerned. I changed over during the winter—we converted the car to right hand drive and immediately that happened I felt completely with-it again and I think the Scottish Rally result came out of that.

IS: What is your favourite rally?

AB: It must be the Circuit of Ireland. It's my home event and I think that it's always a lot easier to do your own event. The people watching are behind you—especially if there are a lot of foreigners or English people over, you get a great help. I think that is why the Northern Ireland autotest team do so well, everyone is watching how they are doing and is keen to see them winning. They have this extra responsibility; if they go back and have not won—everyone knows about it. I think that is why I like the Circuit and its tarmac too which I like the best.

IS: What about the last Manx? You were ahead of Clark when he retired.

AB: I should have enjoyed that event very much but I didn't—not while it was happening. It was very very hard work. As soon as sponsorship comes along you are responsible to a lot of people who you didn't have to think about before. They are putting money in because first of all the sponsor is looking for publicity value and to get that publicity you have to have the odd win and without wins you are not news any more. It does put a big strain on me having this extra responsibility. It was certainly a lot easier whenever I was competing on my own because if it didn't all happen right—I just went home and that was it. Now there are various people looking for results, they don't say as much, in fact the team I'm with, Lombard and Ulster, are quite decent about it. They say they're not expecting me to win, just to try my best. They really like me to finish so the car is seen throughout the rally.

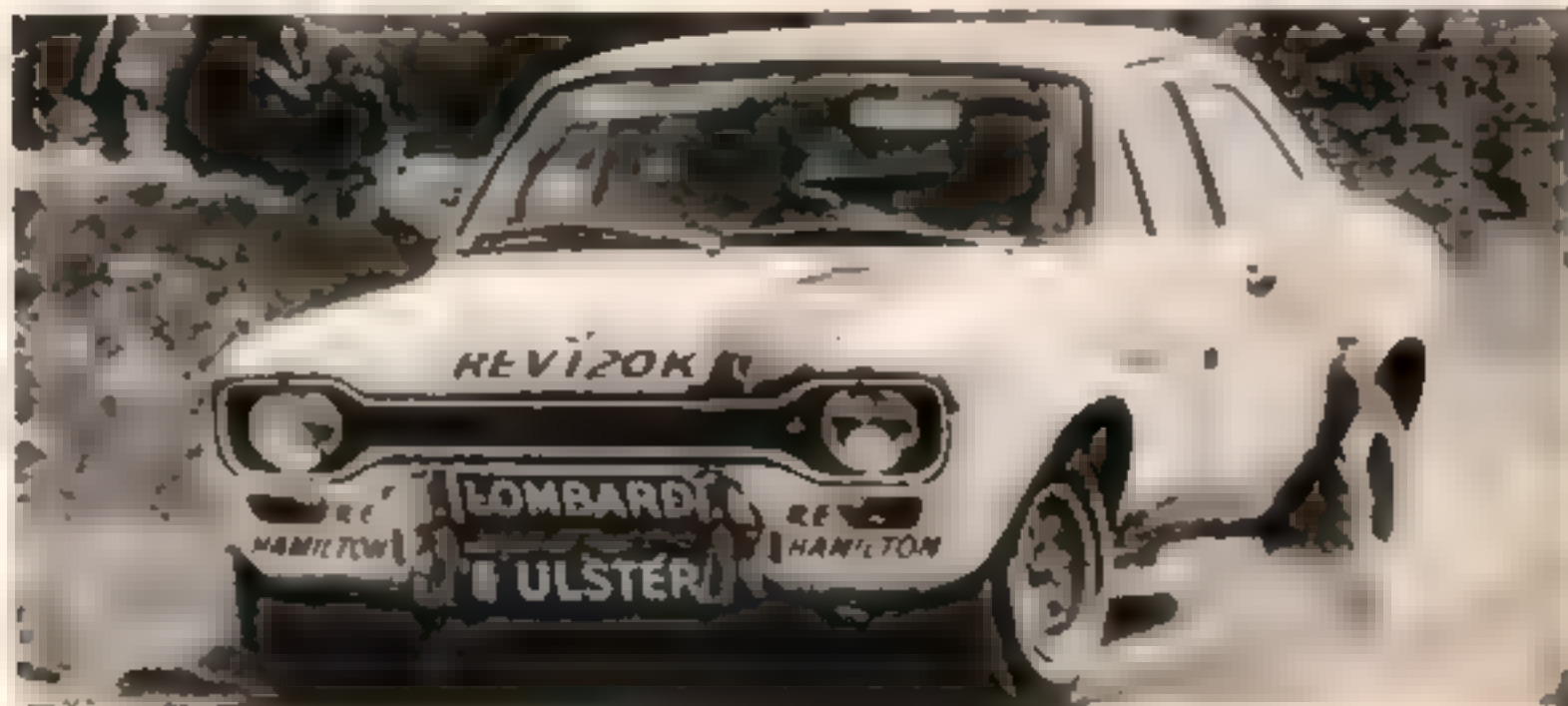
That is why the Manx was a bit of a strain. First of all we did have a real go. I had great help from John Davenport, his experience was marvellous and it meant a lot to our doing well. We put a lot of work in before the rally, a lot of practising and it all came together very well which surprised me because I've only had two co-drivers since I started rallying, Morris Johnstone first of all and then Batty Crawford. It was quite a strain for me to have someone else sitting with me—even worse when it is someone with the reputation John has, having sat with so many drivers. I had to forget it was John sitting there and just drive as I would normally because if I had been thinking it was John I would probably have put it off on the first bend just by trying too hard. I enjoyed the Manx afterwards—it's always nice to win.

IS: So you find you are getting more keyed-up now when you know that you have to fulfil a purpose—is your rallying still as enjoyable?

AB: It's not quite so enjoyable. I now race for enjoyment with a group one Capri. The rally car is so specialised now it is a worry to drive. You get to the start of a stage and you worry about it going off a plug, you worry about it overheating if it sits too long and half of the time my car does not start on the starter for some reason which has never really been cured. With the group one Capri you jump into it, let it tick over on the grid and then you drive it without any work—just good fun, which is why I race. The rallying is now quite serious.

IS: Talking of group one, what are your views on group one rallying?

AB: Rallying is popular now, especially in Ireland and I think if this is to continue then the expense will have to be lowered quite considerably because it has gone a bit mad. I think it is possibly better for spectators now because of these very fast rally cars. Rallying now; it is almost the golden age of rallying but the expense puts it out of reach for many people. I think we will probably have to keep these quick cars although I'm not too sure about that. They are certainly good to watch.





"I have never been so disappointed in any television programme than with the Wheelbase RAC Rally Extra shown last week."

IAN TITCHMARSH

So you think you can televise motoring

Hello! This is Bluff Mumblemore welcoming you to another of those very silly programmes when I surround myself with panels of experts and non-experts and ask them a series of very silly questions to show how non-expert they really all are. You at home can join in too, awarding yourselves 10 points every time the mood takes you. This week I have only been able to persuade one panel to turn up and I'm not very sure which category they fit into. But then, I'm no expert either. First of all there's Barrie "Cheap Thrill" formerly of Fleet Street; then Mrs Judith Flopp, still to be seen there on certain Sundays like her colleague "Instant" Maxwell House. Finally, but far from least among us, is St Michael Bostick, whose pot-boilers are in a class of their own.

So let's go straight into the first question. If you have a television programme about motoring do you (a) show pictures of cars and describe them or (b) show pictures of fields, buildings, trees, animals or whatever else happens to be lying around, and describe them? The answer is (b), quite right, Barrie, never talk about a car when there's some scenery to look at. Which leads unnaturally to the second question: If one of your colleagues knows something about motoring and motor cars and is able to talk about them interestingly as though he knows the difference between a spark plug and a rawl plug would you (a) allow him to compare the programme as he has done for many years or (b) replace him with me? Well, I'll answer that one. It has to be (b), after all one can't spend one's whole life commenting on football matches, can one? Now, let's be a little more specific. Question number 3: If you were given 35 minutes of valuable air time to tell our vast BBC2 audience about (and I quote from the Radio Times) "Britain's biggest motor sporting event," would you (a) attempt to convey to that audience some of the excitement, atmosphere and general drama of the event using pictures rather than words or (b) conduct a series of tedious interviews about a rally that may never happen interspersed with shots of yourselves having a good time? Yes, Judith, (b) is the right answer again and even if you did only get there by the law of averages I know that it would be unthinkable to expose you and your colleagues to too much cold air outdoors when there's all that hot air and booze inside.

To be serious, I have never been so disappointed in any television programme than with the Wheelbase RAC Rally Extra shown last week. Here we had an opportunity, on the evening of the Rally's last day, to expose motor sport to almost soccer standards, taking the regular Wheelbase slot into account also. And what do we get? Shots of half a dozen cars on one special stage in one place over-looking one corner followed by interminable

talk, talk, talk. As the earlier programme had shown, when it was allowed to, you don't need to do more than set up the cameras in the right place and let the spectacle speak for itself. The puerile jabberings of the commentators are superfluous.

Somehow, in between Gill interviewing Timo Makinen and Mrs Jopp asking exactly the same questions later, which had already been asked the previous day anyway, the news filtered through that Bjorn (not Bo, Mr Boyd) Waldegaard and Simo Lampinen had disappeared from second and fourth places on the last morning. But how, when, why and where? Not a whisper! By a process of elimination it seemed that the incredible Markku Alen (who is not a sort of screw, Mr Gill) had finished third but he was not even mentioned. Stuart Turner, who seemed to be in good form, was consulted about the non-event to come but it would have been 10 times more interesting to hear his views on his sensational new protégé. How did he do it? Would he have won but for his early mistake? Who the hell is Markku Alen anyway? Here surely was a story which should have justified even Gill's habitual freneticism but we were left utterly in the dark.

Instead Mrs Jopp told us twice (once would



On Wheelbase, scenery often takes precedence over cars.

have been too often) that her husband had gone past. How nice! So had nearly 200 other co-drivers/passengers. It was almost unbelievable to hear this same woman suggest to Makinen that it was rather surprising to find him still in the Rally, let alone leading, when he really should have lived up to her idea of his reputation as a crasher and breaker of cars. Of course, the only way to win the Monte Carlo Rally and countless others and remain at the top of the tree for over 10 years is to blow cars up and fly off the road. Fortunately, the Finn is a gentleman! And then there were those fabulous shots of the procession into Yock at the end of the Rally, packed with action and drama and conveying the whole essence of the five days which had gone before... like hell! And as for devoting half the programme, at a conservative estimate, to a discussion about a Rally which looks like surpassing even England's efforts in the proper World Cup for the Damp Squib of the Year award, words fail me as often as they fail Mr Mumblemore.

For five days of the week I am involved in a profession far removed from cars and motor sport. Yet the people I meet, the lay

viewers in motoring terms, never have a good word to say for Wheelbase and in particular its regular presenters. Presumably the BBC's audience research figures will convince the programme's Editor that I either meet untypical viewers or they are masochists. In my view Wheelbase is in the process of undoing all the good it used to do and is beginning to render an active disservice to motor sport in particular.

There is a lack of imagination. The same old dreary items are churned out year after year about the Motor Shows, how marvellous foreign cars are and the Pirelli Calendar with the odd Grand Prix or major rally thrown in, usually when it's in an exotic place to give the team a nice holiday into the bargain. Fancy sending a crew, presumably at vast expense, to the Seychelles to tell the world about that over-exposed calendar and motoring in those islands. Wonder how much the BBC paid for that? Of course, if the World Cup Rally is boosted enough at this stage everyone should be allowed to trot off to more sunny climes when it starts, unless the powers-that-be were listening to Stuart Turner.

Glamour seems to be all that matters these days when it comes to creating stories. Apart from the occasional reference to the great number of starters in the Rally, the uninformed viewer might have been forgiven for thinking that there were only about 20 cars in the RAC International "names." When it comes to motor racing, Gill's knowledge seems to extend no further than the Christian names of the Grand Prix drivers: "Tell me Jackie, how do you rate Jody and Jochen today against greats of yesteryear like Stirling and Mike and before them Alberto and Luigi?"

There was a ray of hope the other week. Murray Walker, who always speaks with conviction even if he did tell us the other day that Chevrons were built by Clive Bennett in Oldham, was allowed some time to look into the world of motor-cycle racing. It was an all too short glimpse by someone who seems to want to convey his enthusiasm for the sport rather than project his own personality. No chance of seeing him again, I suppose, the blighter knows too much. Where is Gordon Wilkins who has probably forgotten more about motor cars than the rest of the performers put together ever knew? There's still dear old Michael Frostick, trundling along dropping bona mots with a studied panache but at least making things interesting. Wonder how long he'll last.

Why on earth do the BBC insist on presenting a programme on motoring as though all the viewers are "laymen" who need to be jollied along by Uncle Cliff to keep their interest going? Gordon Wilkins did the job for years and audience figures can't have dropped otherwise the programme would have been. Does motor racing really have to be described with words and phrases, and inflections of tone, which would normally be used to try to excite the interest of a five-year-old who didn't want to go to the zoo? Raymond Baxter never does, Robin Richards never does, while Murray Walker seems able to create excitement in quite a different way never artificially. The BBC would surely never tolerate an amateur on Match of the Day in place of Jimmy Hill or his predecessor David Coleman or in the place of Cliff Morgan or Nigel Starmer-Smith on Rugby Special or in place of Percy Thrower on Gardeners World, so why on Wheelbase?

Feelings of frustration and irritation at the way Wheelbase has been going have been growing within me for some time but their pathetic programme at the end of the RAC Rally was really the last straw. Gentlemen, if you can't do better than this, why not give up? And it's not just me. One of the secretaries at my office told me the morning after how she and her husband had made a special point of watching the programme and how utterly disappointed they were. Enough.

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To help rally enthusiasts keep in trim while there is a ban on rallies, Ford Rallye Sport Club are organising a National Indoor Rally Championship. Secretaries of clubs who enter will be sent Route Cards for 3 events during the early part of 1974. The rallies will be planned by the Ford works co-drivers and will last about an hour each. Competitors will take part as individuals and the rallies will be planned to cover all aspects of rallying: plotting references, organising service, working out fuel stops etc. So, even if you don't win, you will still learn a lot.

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1. Get hold of the Ordnance Survey map to be specified by your Club Secretary.
2. Obtain a Roman pencil, protractor and a pair of compasses.
3. Turn up at the time and place nominated by your Club Secretary.
4. Win your Club Championship. Points will be allocated for each rally on the basis of 20 for the winner, 15 for second, down to 1 for 20th with the Club Champion being the person with the most points over all 3 rallies.
5. During April/May 1974 Ford Rallye Sport Club will organise Finals at various places around the country at which Club Champions will be invited to compete. The competitor with the overall best performance will be National Champion and off he goes to Finland.

Awards

To the overall winner of the Ford Rallye Sport National Indoor Rally Championship: an expenses paid trip to the 1000 Lakes Rally plus an opportunity to help the Ford works team during the event.
2nd overall - A voucher for £60 worth of Ford Rallye Sport Performance Parts.
3rd overall - A voucher for £30 worth of Ford Rallye Sport Performance Parts.
4th - 10th overall - Rally jackets.
To the winner's club: £50 towards club funds.
Clubs may wish to give their own awards for Club Champions.

Other points

There will be no entry fees (unless clubs wish to make a charge to help their funds or to buy prizes) and all 3 rallies for a club will be based on the same map so that competitors will only need one copy. The competition is only open to members of R.A.C. Recognised Clubs. No driving or competition licences are required, nor are there any age limits. Entrants may only compete under one club name. The competition will not be deadly serious, so no protests will be allowed and we reserve the right to chop and change the rules in any way we like it! The following panel of judges have been appointed:

David Hardcastle	Motor
Ray Hutton	Autocar
Gerry Phillips	Motoring News
van Sadler	Autosport

So there it is - three rallies with no entry fees, no petrol bills and a chance to win a trip to the 1000 Lakes. Make sure your Club Secretary completes the form below.

Entry Form

To be completed by Secretaries of R.A.C. Recognised Motor Clubs only.
Name of Club

Name and address of Club Secretary

Telephone number (home) (work)

Please tick the O.S. map on which you want all 3 of your rallies to be based:
128 61 111 149 164

How many copies of the Route Card do you want for each event (allow 1 per competitor)?

Date Signature

Please complete and return to the following address by 20th December 1973.

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From Helsinki, Finland's new rally star Markku Alen.

MARKKU ALEN — the background to Finland's exciting new young rally star

Bright new faces are the stock-in-trade of the daily press but in real life, they are rare indeed. However, there is always the exception that proves the rule and in rallying 1973, the exception is a young Finn called Markku Alen.

Born in 1951 on February 15 in Helsinki, his family little thought that he would eventually be interested in motor sport for his first main occupations were basketball and skiing. Tall and athletic, Alen is the antithesis of some of the great names of motor sport who are often short and aggressive. Motor cars made their first impression on his life

when at the tender age of eight he was allowed to take the wheel of his father's car and shortly astonished the adults by showing that he could really drive it unaided. Just four years later, he was bought his first motorbike which was a specially made miniature competition bike on which he rode his first race. By the age of sixteen he had his first car though again it was not a full sized road going device.

As soon as he was eighteen, he obtained a proper driving licence and acquired a Renault 5 Gordini with which he started to drive in ice races and rallies. His very first rally was

the Hankirally in 1968 in which he competed in the Junior class for drivers that have not previously won any award. By the end of that year, he was the Junior champion in rallies for Finland. When the Gordini became a bit tired, he bought a Sunbeam 900 from the Finnish dealership which was under the direction of ex-European Rally Champion, Pauli Toivonen. He had quite a lot of success with the Sunbeam and indeed in 1971 he won the Finnish ice race championship outright with that car. He had a try with a Opel Kadett in Group 1 but it wasn't long before he was offered a Group 2 Volvo 142 by the Finnish importer and he has driven for them for the past two and a half years. In the past four years, he has won no less than twelve Finnish rallies which is no mean feat when you consider that the opposition comes from such drivers as Timo Makinen, Hannu Mikkola and Simo Lampinen. In the past year, he has been fortunate enough to have personal sponsorship from Marlboro in Finland and his successful Volvo has been decked out in the distinctive red and white stripes of the Marlboro Racing Team Finland. At the end of 1972 he branched out into Europe with the 142S to compete in the RAC Rally where he finished 12th overall.

It is not difficult to see how his basic interest in the sport was aroused if you consider that his father used to race a Mini Cooper S and indeed was several times Finnish ice race champion with such a car. The family firm is concerned with painting contracting and employs over three hundred people decorating the insides and outsides of offices and houses. When he is not involved in rallying Alen works for his father's firm, but increasingly he finds more time is being devoted to driving. As only a few rallies in Finland can actually be practised on the roads that will be used during the rally, he likes to drive as much as possible and often goes out at night to drive with bad lights and in bad conditions to prepare himself for the worst that a rally can offer. In addition, he tries to keep fit by playing squash, ice-hockey and doing a regular amount of running and swimming.

Practically at the top in Finland where he finished an excellent second overall on this year's major event, the 1000 Lakes, he wanted to further his career by venturing more outside Finland like so many others have before him. Scooped up by talent-spotters Ford, Markku took part in the Lindisfarne in preparation for the RAC with a C & S Escort and would have finished second to Roger Clark but for steering rack trouble making him OTL. But his sensational performance with the Motorcraft Escort on the RAC from 177th place to third is why everyone is now talking about 22-year-old Markku Alen, the world's brightest new rally star.

JOHN DAVENPORT

Headlights ablaze for the fog on the RAC Rally's Dalby South stage, Alen heads for third place in the C&S Escort.





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RAC RALLY - INTERNATIONAL

Makinen fights off BMW challenge for victory

By JOHN DAVENPORT

After a fantastic season where he has won all the Finnish championship events bar one including the 1960 Lakes World Championship event, Timo Makinen brought his year to a rousing close by winning the RAC Rally. His Ford Escort RS 1600 prepared by Ford and entered by them in association with the Milk Marketing Board led the rally from the very early stages. It wasn't all easy though for there was stiff competition all the way from Bjorn Waldegaard's BMW 2002 Ti and the Saabs of Sime Lampinen and Per Eklund. There were other Fords too in the chase with Roger Clark trying to repeat his last year's win despite a bout of flu and the new whizz kid, Markku Alen, in the Motorcraft sponsored Escort pulling back from 177th overall to finish third behind Clark.

Without doubt, this was one of the best RAC Rallies ever held; it received a superb entry and was blessed with bright but damp weather which meant that none of the stages was driven in the target time. Its biggest problem was the dark shadow of petrol rationing which threatened to have the rally stopped right up to the last minute and caused it to lose a great deal of the television time that it might otherwise have been allotted. However, the BBC television and radio services did the rally proud and were one of its best defenders in the face of a charge of extravagance.

The format of the RAC Rally has rarely changed very much but there is always something new that Jack Kearsley and Jim Porter are trying out. This year, since the rally was once again centred on York, it was decided to give the competitors two proper nights in bed and run the Yorkshire stages as a sort of finale on the Wednesday morning. To be truthful this worked well though the carnage to Saab, BMW and Ford alike might have made many of them wish that the rally had stopped on Tuesday night! However, it did make Wednesday a very crowded, shortened day and many of the competitors went on record as saying that they would far rather have another night on the road at the weekend, Monday in bed and then the excellent Yorkshire stages on Tuesday with the parties, meetings and balls on Wednesday with plenty of time to prepare for them.

One of the most pleasant things about the RAC Rally as it is held at present is the choice of York as its centre. The entire town becomes rally orientated for a week and the local hoteliers in particular go out of their way to make the rally drivers welcome. In addition, the York Motor Club throws itself wholeheartedly into the rally and should perhaps be given billing along with the national body for helping to organise it. They have so many things like rally driver taxi services and even help if you break down that one wonders if there is anything that they haven't thought about. York racecourse, the location of the start and finish and scrutineering, is not the warmest place in the world but sensible organisation plus a few heaters made even that work well. This year, the University of York had been co-opted into helping the results team by the loan of their computation outfit which kept the results up to date and accurate though it is still a shame that the RAC cannot get out lists of stage times in order of fastest. That is being somewhat finicky and it was good to see the results up to date, promptly on display and accurate.

To recap briefly on the route, Saturday morning saw the cars head south from York to tackle stages at Bramham Park, Clitstone and then go to the centre of Birmingham for Sutton Park before heading into Wales for the night. Morning saw a forest stage in Radnor, two tarmac stages near Bridgnorth, a repeat of Sutton Park and then just four stages before the return to York. Sunday morning, the cars went to the Lake District before doing southern Scotland in the night and then having six hours rest at Glasgow as the northern loop had been cancelled in the interests of economy. On Tuesday, the Peebles stages were followed by an afternoon in Kielder and then just three stages before getting back to York for supper and another night's sleep. The Wednesday morning took in Yorkshire and the competitive motoring was over by lunchtime.

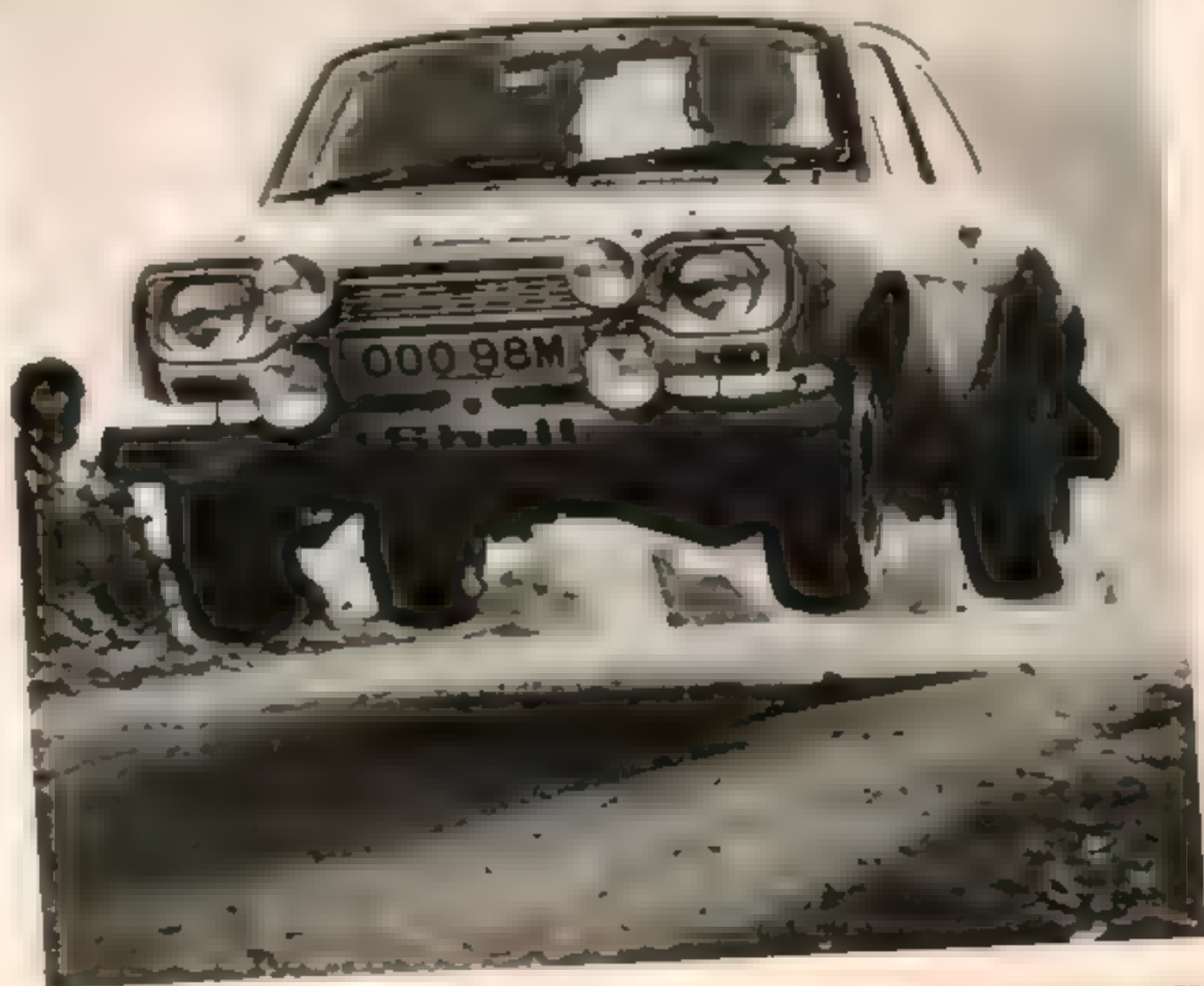
The Welsh stages—if we may call the first part of the rally that—were covered in last week's Autosport. All the major teams lost some of their cars but some were worse hit than Swedish Opel and Datsun. In the past, the Swedish Dealer Teams of Opels have been reliable and fast but 1973 was not their year for the RAC Rally. Anders Kullang/Donald Karlsson were the first to go when their Ascona left the road on Talleis far from any spectators and it was not until the rally passed that they could get their virtually undamaged car back to the road. Despite the fact that they were using the crossflow engines and getting more power than in previous years, they had not been really contending for the lead and had taken a back-seat to Walter Rohrl/Jochen Berger whose

Yumping well off the ground are clear winners Makinen/Liddon on the Burwarton stage



Irmacher car from Germany was always in the first four. Ove Eriksson/Bjorn Cederberg retired the second of the Swedish cars in the middle of the Cloasnog stages with what sounded like a broken piston and though they were able to limp out of the forest on three cylinders, the service car could do nothing for them and the car was towed back to York. This left Gunnar and Ingelov Blomqvist in one of last year's Asconas to carry on the battle which they did despite little problems like two punctures on Radnor.

If Rohrl was doing well for German Opel, Rauno Aaltonen/Paul Easter were not so happy with their car. Unlike some Asconas, this one had quite a lot of turning lock-to-lock and something which Mr Aaltonen described as "unpredictable brake response" which seems to mean that sometimes they worked and sometimes they didn't. To be fair, his was not the newest car from Irmacher but it was something of an indignity when he coasted to a halt to discover that his plastic throttle pedal had melted after the exhaust had been hit up to touch the floor. They eventually retired in Wales when a piston broke and they couldn't stand the noise of driving it on three cylinders any longer. The other Swedish/Irmacher Opel Ascona 1.9 Carlsson hit severe trouble on the very first stage when the engine cut out and when he finally got it off the stage it was found to have two broken cam followers. These were mended and then his next problem turned out to be the bolts breaking that held the carburettors on to the inlet manifold. These were drilled out and larger bolts fitted which cured the trouble. It is interesting to note that the





Getting well crossed-up is the works BMW of Waldegaard who seemed certain for second place before Wednesday's inversion.

works Fords which were fitted with 80 mm Weber carburettors had a similar problem and at the first rest halt in York, the carburettors from Mikkola's retired car were stripped off his engine, drilled out complete with inlet manifold and fitted to Mäkinen's leading car in the morning. His carburettors were then given the same treatment and fitted to Clark's car at Newby Bridge.

Not for the Datsun team such mechanical high jinks. They lost two of their three 240 Zs in Wales and both through leaving the road. The story isn't quite that simple however for they were in brake trouble caused by the rear drum brakes fading as they were not man enough to take the punishment. Before the rally, they had done some testing and fitted rear brake servos to try and get the proper brake balance required by the drivers for forest stages (more brakes are needed on the rear than in normal driving). However, this just meant that the rear brakes overheated quicker and the drivers were left to drive the stages with just front brakes. Chris Schläter/Martin Holmes were leading the trio but sheer frustration caused them to try to make up on the uphill what they were undoubtedly losing downhill and they went off going up on Dovey two. It took 20 spectators and a Triumph 2000 to extricate them after the rally had passed. Tony Fall/Mike Wood only lasted a few more stages and then an over-optimistic broadside took them over a large stone which not only wedged under them but also smashed up the pedal box and they retired. The third car of Harry Kallstrom/Claes Billstam heated up its rear brakes so much that the linings split and had to be replaced several times but by being cautious they stayed in the rally though at York the first time they were 23rd overall. Later in Scotland, they broke a speedo cable and, more seriously, split the sump guard which is made of fibreglass and had to have both replaced. By the finish they were disgruntled but 14th—a big change from the two times that Kallstrom has won the event.

In the Ford camp, all was rosy for four stages and then on Sutton Park both Hannu Mikkola/John Davenport and Markku Alen/Iikka Kivimäki left the road in the Motorcraft car. Both these drivers got back on the road but Mikkola had broken a bone in his hand which swelled so much that he could not drive and had to retire. Alen lost six minutes as he was off the road at the same time as Tony Fall in the Datsun and the British driver got pushed back first and this dropped him to 177th place overall from which he made a fighting return. On this same bend which was a deceptive uphill right-hander not long after Blomqvist's park bench, no fewer than 18 crews left the road though few were so unlucky as to totally wreck their car as happened to Russell Brookes/John Brown in the ATV Escort loaned from Boreham. When night fell, Clark's influenza got worse and for most of the Welsh stages he was suffering from reduced vision almost to the point where Tony Mason was convinced that his driver could see fog that he could not. However, Mäkinen and Liddon were having a good run with no big troubles apart from the carburettor bolts occasionally failing and a couple of punctures including one picked up on Radnor on the same logs where Pat Moss. Liz Crellin crashed with the Clark's Renault Alpine.

In the Saab team, the biggest disappointment was the retirement of Stig Blomqvist/Arne Hertz in Coad-y-Brenin. They hit something, as yet unidentified, with the front wheel and bent both wishbones as well as their mounting points. Using the jack, they got the thing straight enough to motor off the stage and at the service point changed the wishbones but they could not get the body really straight. The consequence was that everything vibrated so badly that the exhaust and carburettors dropped off the engine and it took a long time to screw it back together and they ran out of time after completing some more stages. The Simo Lampinen/Solve Andreasson car gave a bit of trouble

with water consumption and they feared that their rally might be over. The Saab V4 engine does not use a cylinder head gasket these days but just a sealing ring and the machining of the head and block is most important. It seems that Lampinen's engine had a slight porosity somewhere for it brewed up once in Wales and then sealed again and repeated the performance in Scotland where they were nearly excluded when they checked in on 60 minutes lateness at the start of one of the Glentworth stages. However, despite this worry and a cautious start, Lampinen worked his way up to fifth overall at York just a few seconds ahead of his team-mates, Per Eklund/Bo Reinikka.

Renault Alpine despite being the World Champions had lost two-thirds of their striking force on the first part of the rally with their greatest hope, Jean-Luc Therier/Michel Vial coasting to a halt on the fifth stage at Glasshampton. The problem was not immediately obvious and he did try to drive it out on the starter, but then it became clear that it wasn't going to make it and they turned their attention to trying to repair the fault which was in the distributor but that too proved impossible so after speculating for a while, the two Alpine drivers walked away and left it. Pat Moss went through Wales to lead the ladies section decisively only to have that unfortunate accident in front of the TV cameras. Her nearest rival had been Eeva Heinonen/Selma Saaristo in the Marlboro Volvo 142 but they had a puncture on Dovey one and had to stop in a narrow place to change it which cost them 11 m with all the interruptions of the other cars hindering a speedy change. Rosemary Smith/Pauline Gullick thus lay second in the Ladies section with the Lombard and Ulster Escort and the leaders were the French girls, Marie-Claude Beaumont/Christine Gignot in the Opel France Commodore. This big car had been going very consistently though it did suffer a hole in its petrol tank in Wales and broke both rear shock absorbers on one occasion. In the closing stages of the rally, the battle between Heinonen and Beaumont was quite close until



Ladies Award winner Eeva Heinonen went very well with the big Volvo to finish 32nd overall.

It was resolved on the Dalby North section on the Wednesday when the Opel went off and had to be pulled back on again by Henri Greder/Peter Jupp in the other big Opel from France, only to then lose all its oil pressure on the subsequent stage and retire.

The surprise of the rally was the performance of the BMW of Bjorn Waldegaard. Hans Thorsellus who, until the Hafren stages in Wales, were swapping the lead with Makinen's Escort. On the Hafren stage, he started to have a problem with the rear brakes fading and lost 20s to the Escort and this was repeated in Penmachno and one of the Clocaenog stages so that by the time the night section was over, they had dropped back to the second some 3m behind Makinen. During one of his attempts to cure the problem just after Hafren, Waldegaard arrived to a stage where there was a big queue waiting for a doctor to get into the course car which had rolled and had it not been for the co-operativeness of the other competitors, Waldegaard would have been held up and possibly excluded. His team-mates, Achin Warmbold, Jean Todt were having a less successful time and had run into all sorts of minor problems involving changes of spark plugs and a broken exhaust manifold. Their biggest problem was to be punctures and in the course of the rally they had at least six, nearly all of

which cost them time.

The lone Lancia of Amilcare Ballestreri/Silvio Maiga went off on Hafren and bent a wishbone. By the time that they had got lifted back on and the part changed, they were almost out of time and checked in at the next stage with 59m of lateness. Less fortunate were Prince Michael of Kent/Nigel Clarkson who had a broken manifold in their Escort Mexico and what with getting that fixed (they were stopped by the police for making too much noise on one occasion) and taking a wrong turning, they went 7m over the maximum lateness at one stage and were excluded when they got back to York.

Private Escorts were doing quite well for Barry Lee Jon Gittins were eighth with the Centre Hotels/Clarke and Simpson car while Andrew Cowan/Johnstone Syer were ninth with the Scotsman Escort, but the rally had already lost Vic Preston Jnr Paul White and Adrian Boyd/Robert McBurney with blown head gaskets at Capel Bangor. Boyd for one was glad to retire for he had flown off in Sutton Park kinking his car and hurting both his wrists. Colin Vandervell/Andrew Marriott slipped on a patch of ice in Hafren and badly damaged the car as well as bruising Marriott. He, too, must have been a bit relieved when the Triplex Escort shed a halfshaft and they retired. One of the biggest disappointments not for regular rally fans but for hundreds of

people that had turned out to see Jimmy Savile who retired, along with his driver, Jill Robinson, when their Escort Mexico expired on Sutton Park.

The two Fiats ran without problem in Wales but were evidently not sticking their necks out. On the contrary, Per-Inge Walfridsson/John Jensen were going like the bats from below in their dark green, stickerless Volvo 142S and lay seventh after the Welsh stages. The most fragile thing on the car was proving to be the gearbox which apparently has a shared synchromesh ring for second and third gears and this was falling with the urgency of Mr Walfridsson's progress through the forests. In all, it was changed three times during the rally but it seemed to be a very quick job requiring only about 15m. The Toyota team which comprised two Celica 1600s lost Lelf Asterhag/Anders Gullberg with a blown engine while Ove Andersson/Gerry Phillips continued to make the running and were lying 15th back at York.

After Sunday night in bed the rally re-started at eight o'clock on Monday morning to be greeted with the announcement that all rallying authorisations had been withdrawn and that it was going to be illegal to have petrol in cans. However, the Government had decided to let the RAC Rally continue even though all the petrol consumed by everyone on the event would have fallen far below one 747 trans-Atlantic flight. Conscious of this extreme generosity, the rally drivers went first to Esholt sewage works in Bradford where a radar meter was used to measure terminal velocities and BMW headed the list with about 117mph while the Escorts could only manage 107mph because of their lower

On the way to Heaton Park, Manchester, for the next test, Walter Rohrl stopped on the M62 with a broken oil pump and by the time that a service crew had arrived and changed it, he was 7m out of time at the start of the stage and had to retire. Thus the Saaba moved up to lie behind Clark but he seemed to have shaken off the flu and though he could not shake them off completely, he was able to maintain station as they ran on the sea. The next stages were in the Lake District and on the first, Grizedale, Gunnar Blomqvist had another puncture while Andrew Cowan stopped just over a mile in with a broken halfshaft. Peter Ashcroft of Ford motored back to the start of the stage and got Steve Howard of Crystals to take a new halfshaft in to Cowan and then Mick Jones and John

Throwing the Swedish Opel Ascona through the winding Lake District forests, is fifth-place man Gunnar Blomqvist.





The flying Finn's first First!

After four punishing days and nights charging far out round Britain, a much-travelled little scarred Escort RS 1600 carried Timo Mäkinen and Henry Lidd to a cross the finish line as the outright winners of this year's RAC rally.* As well as being Timo's first win after nine game and quiet attempts, it was our tenth outright victory in fourteen years. Despite being a few hundred degrees under the weather, Royce Clark, last year's winner and the reigning rally champion, stubbornly stuck it out to take second place - again in a Ford Escort again on Dunlop. Add results like that to all the other race and rally successes we've had so far this year and you could say our tyres really do take some beating. Which is just one of the reasons why you'll find it hard to get anything better than Dunlop under you.

*Results subject to official confirmation

DUNLOP leading the field to give you the best

Griffiths of Fords ran in with the tools to change it. Cowan got going again but the real problem proved to be the bearing cap which came loose again just at the end of the stage and the wheel and shaft nearly demolished the timing caravan. In any case, it was the end of the Scotsman's rally.

Four stages later came the infamous Dodds Wood which everyone hates but has not yet claimed a victim until this year. Barry Lee was chatting to the marshal at the start who said that it was flat downhill at the finish now that it had been tarmaced. Whether Lee was heeding that advice too much or if he was just psychologically believing that a flying finish is literally that, but he took to the woods after the finish line and spectacularly inverted the Escort. Miraculously neither he nor John Gittins were hurt in the crash though Gittins did hurt his hand when he got out of the car and fell 50 ft down the bank. Makinen collected a puncture on this stage and was looking a bit worried about Waldegaard who had been really flying in the Lake District to narrow the gap between them to 2½ m.

After a time control in Carlisle, the rally moved forward into a half-night spent in south-western Scotland. Before Kirroghtree, the news was that Lampinen was out but it was just another of his big brew-ups and he came through at last, though almost out of time. Less fortunate were Tapio Rainio/Klaus Lehto in the Scan-Auto car from Saab Finland who were running around with Lampinen but stopped to get their exhaust fixed between the two Glentworth stages and were out of time checking into the second one. Markku Alén was by now in the top ten and lining up to pass some more people but he had a panic at Kirroghtree when he got caught on a stone coming away from the stage down the rough track and completely finished his propshaft. Luckily, he got into Ford service where there was more than one service car and had it changed while the other mechanics were sorting out Makinen's handbrake. Apparently the separate disc brake calliper for this had been caught by a stone and was leaking fluid from the banjo connection. Kallstrom's Datsun was in for service as well with a broken speedo cable and a split sump shield while the two South Africans, Elbie Odendaal/Christie Kuun finished their rally when the rear axle broke between Clatteringshaw Dam and Kirroghtree.

From this area there was a long run up to the Erskine Bridge Esso Motor Hotel where most of the crews got some sleep though the bar was thoughtfully left open for a few hours for those who needed refreshment. An early morning start saw the cars head straight for Peebles and the three classic stages of Glentworth, Cardrona and Elibank. Here Makinen and Waldegaard stayed in close contention with the Escort just starting to pull something out but fastest man, as nearly always was Alén who was now fifth just over a minute behind Lampinen and Eklund. The Forest of Kielder was next on the menu but to reach it the rally passed through the last Scottish forest, that of Craik. Strangely, the classic Munster corner didn't seem to catch anybody out, but later in the stage, there were at least two corners that claimed many victims. Per Eklund was the man furthest up the field that got caught out and he lost 5 m getting pushed back up to the road again, and dropped to eighth place as a result. Ove Andersson in the Toyota had just changed to British Dunlops from the Japanese variety and was getting along much better but this corner caught him as well and he inverted it. The Toyota was so strong that very little damage was caused but he did lose a couple of minutes getting it put upright. Warmbold, Mehta, Verini and Bror Danielsson all caught it in the same place though all had slightly different stories. Warmbold just reckoned that it was icy and was a bit upset that considering the combination of straight, brow and corner there was no sort of warning. Shashar Mehta/Kelth Wood in the little Datsun Sunny said that they thought it looked dodgy but as there was only a single spectator, they reckoned it must be one of those long straights. It was only when they



From a slow start, Nicolas' Alpine worked up to fifth by the end.

crested the brow that they saw the welcoming committee and the bend. Verini went quite a way off and he and Nini Russo only got back by driving down through the trees, with the help of spectators, to join another road and thence back to the stage. Finally, Bror Danielsson/Ulf Sundberg the Group 1 leaders in their BMW 2002 from Sweden went off and lost 5 m but as Danielsson said, the spectators were getting tired by then and as he had a 20 m lead to the next Group 1 car, he wasn't very bothered except for the places he lost in general classification. Last year, as you may remember, he was leading the Group 1 until the very last stage when he broke down so he was determined that there should be no such thing this year.

For Eklund, this was a disaster and he started to run wild trying to make up time as Alén had been but three stages later he tipped it up again and realised that if he wasn't careful he would not finish at all. Makinen was in trouble with his shock absorbers and broke both rears on the first Kielder stage but still beat Waldegaard by 2 s on the stage. There was some trouble with officious minor organisers in the Kielder area but a quick phone call to the Rally Headquarters and Jim Porter resolved the question and servicing continued off route as it had been planned.

With Kielder over before night fell, there were only the three stages of Hamsterley and Stang before the cars returned to York for their third night halt—counting Erskine as one! It was time for extensive servicing and in the Ford camp shock absorbers and struts were changed ready for the morrow for their cars lay first, third and fifth with Waldegaard at second, Lampinen fourth and Walfridsson

Up until now, the rally had been extremely close-fought but with no sense of panic or urgency and everyone thought that the Wednesday morning in Yorkshire would be a calm finale with no serious changes of position in the top runners. How wrong could they have been? For Makinen and Clark, all was comparatively serene for Makinen was 2 s away from being 4 m ahead of his BMW rival while Clark had 1 m 50 s from him to Lampinen with Alén 1 further 50 s behind. Certainly Lampinen was going to have to look to his laurels to keep his fellow Finn at bay but at first in the slippery conditions he was able to do that and, indeed, took 5 s off Alén on the first stage. However, the Escort took 46 s off him on Bickley and an incredible 1 m 41 s on the long straights of Dalby South. In order to keep in contention, Lampinen was using the Saab to the limit but then it started to be reluctant to pull maximum revs in top gear and started to lose water. He kept it going but on the last but one test, in Pickering Forest, it seized. He freewheeled to the finish but it would not re-start and when they tried towing it to start, the crankshaft broke and a rod came through the side. Had that not happened, he might have stood a chance for Alén had gone off on Pickering, turned a somersault and hit a tree with the top of the boot. The spectators were so quick to get him back to the road, however, that he lost only a minute but that could have made the difference.

While being lifted speedily from the embrace of the trees, Alén noticed that Bjorn Waldegaard was amongst the people pushing

him. The Swede's car was even further down and much more badly damaged. The onlookers had to go and get a saw and cut down a tree to free him and he took a maximum on the stage which dropped him to seventh place. Thus on the last but one stage, Alén had had a big accident himself but because of the retirement of others had moved from fifth to third place.

There was plenty of other trouble, too. Gunnar Blomqvist went off on the flying finish of Dalby North and broke his Opel's radiator. He got a lift with a car into Thornton Dale and brought the service crew back along the public road into the forest to change it and continued to finish sixth ahead of Waldegaard. Poor Per Eklund was not so lucky for he broke a front wishbone on Bickley and was not able to get out of the forest and thus retired. Warmbold got caught out by a firebreak on the same stage and lost a minute getting extricated from the deep mud. The Fiat Spyder of coming-man Verini had hitherto run without any mechanical trouble but on Wykeham he chopped a brake pipe and very nearly ran out of time getting it fixed for he checked at the start of Broxa stage 56 m late. Jack Tordoff Phillip Short had no luck at all in their home county for their Porsche Carrera ground to a halt with a broken inner joint on a driveshaft and despite all their efforts, they could not get off the stage to change it. Tordoff admitted ruefully that he had never changed the shafts on the car since he had it which is probably putting a little too much trust in German engineering. The rally also lost Ballestrieri when he popped off the road going down a long straight and since there were no spectators, he had to wait too long to get out to be able to continue. Even Eeva Heinonen had a couple of minor excursions on this last morning of rallying but it was nothing to the problems of Marie-Claude Beaumont who retired on Pickering with no oil pressure and thus gave the Finnish girl the Coupe des Dames. Almost the last drama of the rally was provided by Jean Pierre Nicolas who had a monumental spin on Dalby South with his Renault Alpine but somehow, he missed everything and went on to finish fifth overall. The Alpine showed quite a lot of evidence of the punishment that it had received and the front wings were almost cracked right through.

The cars returned to York via two time controls at Helmsley and just outside York so that they should come in pretty much together and thus provide more of a spectacle. That it certainly was with the best cars of Waldegaard and Alén proving the main attraction and even overshadowing the champagne splashing antics of the winners. Timo Makinen and Henry Liddon. One would have thought that they could have at least thrown milk around over the car and spectators instead of wasting all that plonk which would have been much nicer inside them, but it was a pretty complicated deal anyway with rally drivers endorsing milk. For Ford, there was even a problem of being seen to endorse fuel wastage so the next morning Makinen and Liddon did an economy run to London in an Escort 1100 at 50 mph to show that rallying is not all wastage. Very nice of Ford to get the first three home in the best RAC Rally for many years, but even more points for thinking up that idea to reconcile the conflict in the public mind.

Fowkes is highest-placed British privateer at ninth

The spotlight on the RAC, quite naturally, falls on the top works and continental drivers, but of course the majority of the entry is made up of private entries and drivers of national and club level. In the past few years, these type of drivers have turned their sights more to the thoughts of class wins than outright victory, mainly because of the equality of the opposition, and the increase in cash awards for classes from the organisers and from companies offering good bonuses. However there are always the few that "go for gold" whether privately or with the added assistance of a sponsor. Few can hope to live with the cream of the world's drivers, on what has now turned into the top event of the year; but one man that proved that he has capabilities to live with the "greats" was Tony Fowkes, who drove brilliantly to finish ninth in the Cables & Components Escort RS.



Tony Fowkes/Bryan Harris on their way to ninth place with some spectacular motoring.

Fowkes was a little disappointed last year to finish out of the top ten, although he finished second best British driver to Roger Clark. This year he again was the second British driver to finish although he achieved his ambition of finishing in the top 10. His stage times on the last day prove that Fowkes can live with the fastest of drivers. In fact Bryan Harris was quite worried about his driver the day before the event, as Fowkes had been working solid for 48 hours prior to the event to finish off the car, eventually arriving in York, some five hours late for scrutineering. They had a moment of drama on the Burwarton stage when they went off the road on an extremely slippery corner, but only lost just over a minute. After a consistently quick run they went into the last day lying 15th overall, and with some really inspired driving, collecting a string of times in the top five, he hauled himself into ninth place—at a time when most drivers would have been quite content to motor to the finish.

The classes for the RAC are always relatively similar each year, and such was the case this year with the exception that Groups 1 and 3 were amalgamated. This in fact did not affect the class results as some people expected before the event, as most of the potential sports car winners, Porsche Carreras and the like kept to Group 4. Chrysler kept up their domination of the small group 1 class and have now won all three main awards on the home internationals this year. This time, however, their main driver Colin

Malkin opted for group 2 and so Andy Dawson came along and took the class. In fact Dawson loaned the car from the works and prepared it himself. It was the car that Malkin won the class on last year's event, and the car that Dawson used as course car on the Scottish this year. After the first two days he was in fact lying second to John Bloxham in the Birmingham Post Avenger, but took the lead when Bloxham lost four minutes on Wythop with throttle cable problems. In fact Dawson too nearly came to grief on the same stage when he went off, but he soon got back on, with damage to a front strut and exhaust which was replaced. John Bloxham, accompanied on the event by Norman Salt, as Richard Harper was organising the Midland section of the rally, had been plagued by punctures on the first half of the event, and he even collected one in Parc Ferme. After his problems on Wythop, he managed to pull back two minutes on Dawson to finish a good second in class some 10 minutes up on Ian Wilson in his Opel Ascona.

An early leader in the class was Roy Fidler and Bob de Jong, driving a new two door Avenger GT for Cal Withers, but he retired on Clonsmog 1 when a valve dropped. Although there are many hard luck stories on the RAC, Richard Hudson-Evans and Terry Thorpe probably feel the most hard done by. R.H.E. was driving his faithful Peugeot 304 in group 1 class, and having survived an uphill roll on the rough Radnor stage, and a flip on to its side on Kielder 3, his final

1973 INTERNATIONAL RAC RALLY OF GREAT BRITAIN

dramas started occurring on Dalby South, just three stages from home. Having holed the radiator, the engine boiled and the head gasket blew. They changed the radiator and slowly chugged through the final two stages, stopping to replenish water on the way, only for the car to expire having completed all the stages.

Chrysler were in fact denied a one-two-three in the class by Ian Wilson's Opel, after Alan Conley had gone off at the infamous hole on Crank. David Hardcastle who finished fifth in class picked up the award for the best-placed journalist to finish while works driver Mike Sutcliffe, drove his Escort Sport to finish having all fallen down the Crank hole. Over from Luxembourg came Tom Maylink (Opel Ascona) accompanied by Welshman John Morgan, who now resides there. They finished despite a number of incidents including soft rolling twice, and at one stage finishing the wrong side of a finish board, but they always kept smiling.

A disappointingly early retirement was Will Sparrow and Nigel Raeburn, in the DTV Vauxhall. The car was using a new blue printed group one engine, reportedly putting out around 160 bhp and Sparrow indeed put up some very quick times in Wales, lying a close second to Danielsson, when a cam follower sheared in the Clonsmog forest and he was forced to retire.

In class two for cars over 1800 cc Groups 1 and 3, Bror Danielsson, had things very much his own way in his BMW 2002 winning by a comfortable 21 minute margin. On last year's event, the Swede started car 98, and was leading by a similar margin until the very last stage when he retired, so understandably he took things very steady on the last day. His only moment on the event was on the famous Crank corner, but he got going very quickly afterwards. Another victim of the Crank corner was Bob Bean, and Alan Greenwood who otherwise had an almost trouble-free event in the Fordure Mexico, to come home a very creditable second in class. Bean has now finished in the placings on all home internationals in his group one Mexico. Marie-Claude Beaumont's last minute retirement just two stages from home benefited Welshman Roland Young and Phil Cooper, both driving Mexicos, who finished 3rd and 4th respectively as Henri Greder in the big Opel Commodore stopped to help the French girl and gained a maximum. Young's only serious problem was a leaking radiator which he changed having found his service crew, who broke down leaving Young and Cowell to complete the Welsh forests without assistance. Phil Cooper's car was in fact only bought second hand on the Monday prior to the event, and upon finishing he put a for sale notice in the window. Luckily for him, there was very little damage done to the car, although he went off twice within half a mile on Pickering on the last day. In fact John Brown, who was by this time spectating organised the assistance to get Cooper on the road again.

Another easy class winner were the Lulbregets brothers driving the Gulf Star Team Daf 66 from Holland. They had things pretty much their own way once Robin Eyre-Maunsell in the Chrysler Imp had retired, although they nearly spilt things with a slow roll at a hairpin on Ennerdale. Eyre-Maunsell had already built up a two minute lead when he went over the edge at a tightening left hander on Dovey 1, and although he eventually got out and completed Dovey 2, he retired immediately afterwards. The ever consistent Peter Hommel in the works Wartburg from East Germany took second in class from his team mate Egon Culmbacher. Unfortunately for the East Germans they lost

Chrysler wins again

1973 RAC INTERNATIONAL RALLY OF GREAT BRITAIN

CLASS ONE

1st CHRYSLER AVENGER

Drivers Andy Dawson & Peter Valentine

2nd CHRYSLER AVENGER

Drivers John Bloxham & Norman Salt



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Pip Dale's Leedhams 23 Firenze was the only finisher in the Group 2 over 2 litre class, here seen on the Dalby South stage.

their third car quite early on with mechanical problems, which their team manager had great difficulty in translating into English, suffice it to say that the car stopped, thus spoiling their chances of the team prize. With the absence of the Scandinavian Skodas this year Callum Barney from Brackley upheld Skoda honours pipping the Rev Rupert Jones, in the Vinto Escort 1100 for fourth in class.

Shakhar Mehta and Keith Wood in the very attractive works Datsun Sunny, won class 4 at their leisure, although he had a serious roll at the Craik corner, but after a few Karate chops by the little Japanese mechanics, the body work was straightened and Mehta continued to win by some 26 minutes. Pat Ryan and Mike Nicholson were lying second to Mehta for most of the event in the very smart group 2 1300 Marina sponsored by Patrick Motors and Cleveland Garage, but first they had a bad roll on Kleider 2, in which they were trapped inside the car before spectators got them out, and then after regaining second place, the distributor drive sheared on Langdale on the last day and they were out. Second place to Mehta then went to David Finch of the CSMA club in an Escort GT, whose only serious problem was a broken valve spring in Enderdale forest. As well as Dunlops providing the rubber wear for the first two cars overall, they also provided the gent who came third in class 4, in the shape of Ian Beveridge, who works for Dunlop in Birmingham.

Unlike a few years ago, when the Mini was all conquering, the first one to finish this year's event arrived in 55th position driven by experienced RAC campaigner Les Birkett. For good measure Birkett took his sponsor along with him; it was none other than Tony Glens the engine builder, who sponsors under the banner of TBR in Gear of Malvern. Another Mini which didn't survive was that of Tom Seal and Roger Platt, who completed the first leg, despite going off backwards on Tarenig, but retired in Scotland. Jennifer Birrell and Alexa Davenport in the Halesfield Motors Simca had a pretty miserable event as they had a head gasket go after Sutton Park, first time round and after a number of other problems they ran out of time and service crews by Capel Bangor on the first night.

Early leader of class five (Group 2 1300 cc to 1600 cc), was the very quick Swede Leif Asterhag, but he soon dropped out in Wales leaving team mate Ove Andersson to take the honours. Always a safe second to Andersson was the new Group 2 Avenger of Colin

Melkin and Brian Coyle, who finished over 30 minutes ahead of third placed man John Midgley in a Toyota Corolla. Melkin in fact did put the car off on the last day but managed to continue without too much delay. John Midgley's third place in class was a very creditable effort as on Tuesday he broke a halfshaft, and as he had no spare he just continued hoping things would last, and at the finish his car looked one of the smartest in the event. Chris Beynon and Lyn Andrews appeared on the event with a very standard looking Escort TC and in fact got themselves

up to 23rd overall by Craik Forest, but then disappeared, with maladies unknown.

Class six (Group 2 up to 2-litre), as usual was the heaviest class, and was taken by most of the drivers that John Davenport's report has covered. Tony Fowkes who came eighth in this class, we have already mentioned. Just over a minute behind him came the Norwegian driver Eric Aaby in an Opel Ascona. Aaby, who is the Norwegian champion, first came to the UK for this year's Scottish and easily took the group 1 award, this time came in a group 2 machine, with

Chris Beynon strikes a tree with his Escort TC on the Glenties stage to the severe detriment of his front right wing, and nearly writing off our photographer's camera case.



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The experience gained during these rallies, plus our constant development of the famous Pirelli Cinturato, has led to the introduction of a new Series 80 tyre, the Pirelli MS35.

This tyre was developed by Pirelli engineers in Scandinavia, working in conjunction with international rally driver, Hakan Lindberg.

Their job was to construct a tyre which could take everything the harsh Scandinavian winters might bring, and which would meet the demanding requirements of Hakan Lindberg.

It took several years to perfect this tyre, and now, it's available to you.

At first sight, the MS35 could be mistaken for a rugged

highway tyre. Unlike many winter tyres, it doesn't look as though it should be fitted to a tractor.

In fact, the MS35 sounds, feels and behaves like a normal radial when used on ordinary roads. It offers great directional stability at high speeds. Angled blocks and sipes present biting edges in all directions. The shoulders are treated to bite into soft ground. And the tread pattern provides progressive cornering characteristics in both wet and dry conditions.

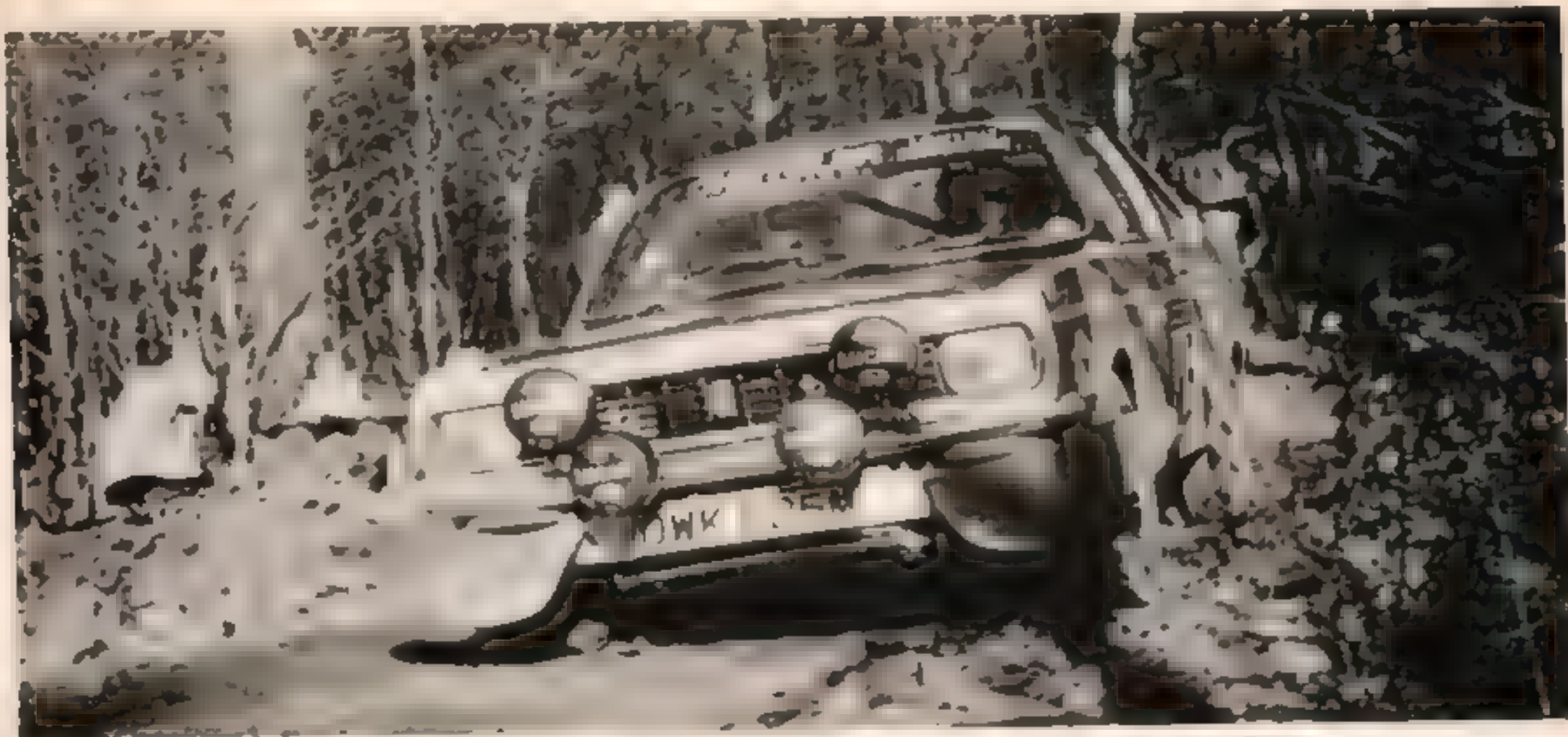
So there's no need to change tyres when the snow and mud have gone.

But when the snow and mud are there, the MS35 really shows how efficiently it handles even in the worst conditions. It has moulded holes ready for the fitment of ice spikes, incorporated into the tread pattern.

Rain. Mud. Hail. Sleet. Snow. Ice.

Whatever the British weather might bring, the Pirelli MS35 can take.

PIRELLI
CINTURATO



Colin Malkin's Chrysler Avenger, in Group 2 form, finished 17th overall and took second in his class to Andersson's Toyota.

the definite intention of finishing, and so eased off on the last day to finish a very creditable 11th overall.

Scottish Champion Drew Gallacher and Ian Muir at one time in the event looked well set for a really high position in the top 10, after being 10th overall by Llandridod Wells, but after a chapter of accidents he did very well indeed to come home in 13th place. First at Esbott Sewage works he spun at speed damaging both front and rear body panels. These he replaced when he arrived in the vicinity of Glasgow, but then he spun again on Cardrona. Then he was one that visited the famous Craik corner (along with some 20 other competitors) rolling and damaging the front of the car and breaking the windscreen, but luckily only losing some 40 s. Having replaced the windscreen with a temporary version he continued but on the last day on the long Dalby South stage a steering arm sheared and he lost a further 2½ m as the front wheels were completely out of line. Donald Heggie was another Scot who finished despite everything. In Wales he lost his brakes and had to drive all four Clocanog stages on the hand brake. All through the event he had problems with rear springs giving up the ghost, and many times he adapted some wood to hold everything in place, whilst he too had replaced a wing and front panel in Glasgow after he hit the only possible tree on the Heston Park stage. Heggie however has the distinction of one of the few to hold a fastest time which he put up on Dyfnant.

Billy Coleman came over from Ireland driving the ex-Chris Scialer Escort, and had a very quiet rally, for Billy especially, coming in a steady 20th overall. This was probably due to the fact that Coleman's service crew were carrying no replacement parts at all and if something had of gone wrong he would have been out. David Piggy Thompson won the award for the first British Private owner. With his Escort, he rolled on Radnor on what was only his second ever international; his first was the Scottish in which he was 10th.

Two very smartly turned out cars were those of Steve Howard/Richard Ward and Michael Jackson/Ian Maxey, who together with the Porsche of Harold Morley formed the Crystal RallySport—Hull team and were in fact the only team of either manufacturers or trade to finish. Morley finished 22nd, Jackson 25th and Howard 26th. Howard's only doubtful moment came on the first stage on Wednesday, Wykeham, when he went off avoiding a Citroen camera car, but with no

damage. In fact all three members of the team had their moments, on Wednesday for Morley also went off on Wykeham and Mike Jackson rolled on Stindale losing the rear screen and a little time. Jackson incidentally drives with one artificial arm, which makes his performance even more incredible. Vin Huxley who has been making his mark on the BTRDA rally scene this year finished a competent 30th overall, having survived the last four stages of Kielder forest without brakes, whilst Colin Francis had to overcome problems of a different kind when co-driving for Frank Pierson. Unfortunately Frank caught flu on the rally and looked quite ill on the Tuesday night belt. He had also been suffering from a recurrent nose bleed, leaving Colin with quite a lot of the road driving to do, but Frank recovered to finish 31st overall.

Of those drivers that didn't finish in class six, Russell Brookes was travelling the fastest, went out the soonest, and was most spectacular. After the first three stages Brookes was lying seventh, in the works loaned, ATV sponsored Escort RS. But on his "home" stage, Sutton Park, he lost it in spectacular fashion, in front of his own television cameras on the corner that brought grief to Allen, Fall, Boyd etc. Unfortunately the car rolled over twice and that was that. Paul Faulkner was another to roll out of the event after starting very quickly for after lying 17th at Llandridod Wells he rolled twice at Cwn-Ys-Gawen and retired. Dan Grewar also retired after going off on Tarenig just a few hundred yards from where Tom Seed's Mini went off Hafren I caused the retirements of two notable British national drivers, namely Peter Clarke, whose engine expired, and Paul Appleby who had an oil pipe shear.

In class seven Pip Dale was eventually the only finisher after driving a very sensible event in his Vauxhall Firenza sponsored by Leedhams of York. The main opposition from the class came in the shape of George Hill in the Martin Group car and David Thompson's Firenza. Since George Hill had changed to the Martin Group, he had installed a new engine in the car built by his usual engine builder J. S. Whitehead. Quite early on he built an early lead on Dale with Thompson just behind, when on the Billing Stage Hill had the first of four axles go and Dale took the lead he held to the finish. Hill's car was indeed very quick, setting a top 10 time on Sutton Park on the Sunday with a little help from co-driver Mike Broad, who lives in Sutton, but the axles just wouldn't stand the power, and by Erskine Bridge time had run out. David Thompson did in fact get

in front of Dale in the Lake District but eventually retired in the Cardrona area with unknown maladies.

Another singleton finisher was Michel Guichard who won class eight in his very standard Alpine 1600. He drove steadily round to finish an unspectacular 74th, but with the damsel of Ballistrieri in the Lancia and Mark Ridout's Alpine he had the class given to him on a plate. In fact Ridout, making his return to international rallying after a three year lay off had no problems with the car at all and was steadily working his way up the field when he was a victim of the Craik corner, and was the only car to finish there, as the front suspension was torn off. Although he got out of the stage on three wheels, with co-driver Mike Sones sitting on the back, the damage was too much and he was forced to retire.

The first four places in class nine for over 1600 cc group 4 cars were taken by "works" machines, but Kevin Vidsen fulfilled the promise shown on events in the latter part of the year, and took the Old Woking Datsun 240Z into 21st place and fifth in class. His drive was not without its moments, for on the icy stages the big Datsun proved quite a handful. On Grisedale the throttle cable broke, and while he was driving on the key he went off into the trees when blinded by the sun, losing 4 m, and on the last day he lost all but third gear and drove the last few stages just to finish. In order to quieten the car for the finish, the Datsun mechanics rammed some wire wool up the exhaust pipes, but unfortunately they put too much in and it seized the engine just short of the time in York, but after a lot of work Vidsen managed to coax the car across the finishing line.

The Clubman's Trophy section, which incorporated the last three days of the event, was won by Brian Evans of Malvern in his Porsche Carrera which finished some 3 m ahead of Fred Henderson who put up a stirring performance in an Escort 1300GT with Mike Dale, who at one time led the Clubman's section, coming in third a further minute down in a 3-litre Capri.

Overall the RAC was as good as ever, without taking into consideration the problems the organisers must have had due to the petrol situation. The event was as popular as ever with the spectators and the marshalling was up to its usual high standard. Let's hope that we shall have an opportunity to go rallying in this country before RAC time next year, but if we don't, at least nobody will have an excuse for not having a car ready for November 1974.

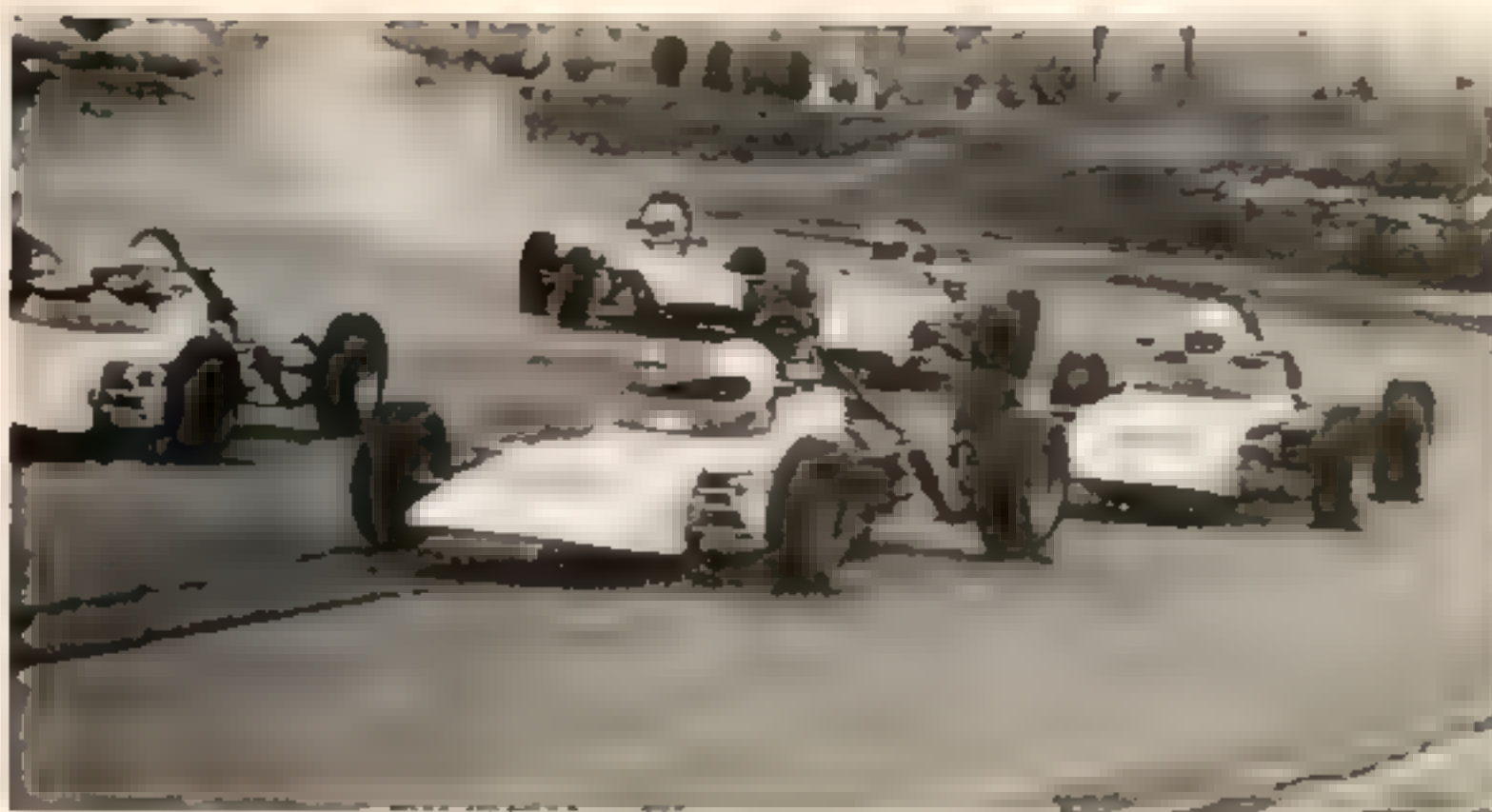
Toyota Celica flies to the top of its class. Again.



A Toyota Celica driven by
Ove Andersson and Gerry Phillips
won its class again
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From left to right: Robert Joubert, Graham Cuthbert and eventual winner, Donald MacLeod fight out a Formula Ford semi final at Snetterton in their Van Diemens

Demon first year in FF for Van Diemen

BOB CONSTANDUROS looks at their championship year

For a marque to have won two championships in this country, come second in another, and contribute to a theoretical win in a further national championship abroad is indeed remarkable achievement, but to have done that in the first season of manufacture makes the feat that much more laudable, especially when the formula is one of the most competitively fought by over 12 major manufacturers and countless "one offs". That Formula is obviously Formula Ford, and the manufacturer is Van Diemen, who burst upon the scene in April of this year when their first car appeared in the hands of Canadian David McCullum. Perhaps another point that makes the success of such a car even more interesting is that the designer/builder (we'll come to that point later) has in fact no technical training. From a tidy Nissan but a stone's throw from Snetterton, Ralph Firman and a staff now consisting of five people have built 15 cars and are currently in the throes of building a further 11.



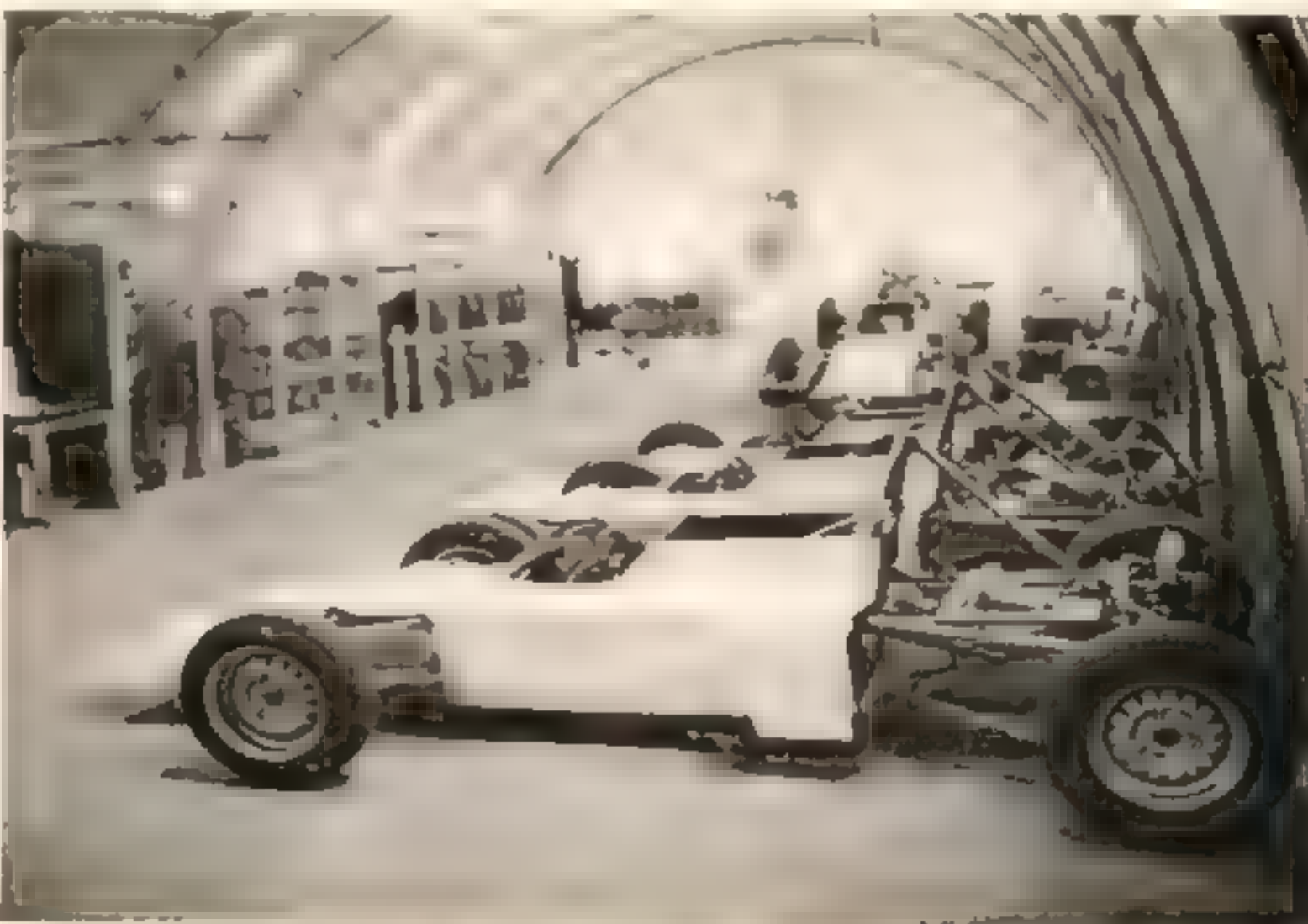
Ralph Firman has a word with his first customer, David McCullum.

As is quite well known, Firman has a long racing background which has given him sufficient experience to virtually obviate the need for technical training. His first job in racing came in 1965 when he went to Jim Russell to help prepare the Jim Russell Racing Drivers school cars. When Formula Ford came along in 1967, the Russell Alexis was developed, and with Ralph on the preparation side, they won

the first FF championship ever to be held in this country, although it was rather theoretical as it wasn't actually formed as a championship.

With this experience behind him, Firman left Russell to run various Formula 3 cars, returning to Snetterton in 1968 to run the works Lotus 69s for Dave Walker and Mo Harner with considerable success. Emerson Fittipaldi showed up late in the season and Ralph began his association with the future World Champion. With Ian Ashley, Emerson and Wilson Fittipaldi, Firman went to Brazil towards the end of 1969 to contest the F3 series out there, and 1970 looked bright with Russell running a Formula 2 Lotus for Fittipaldi. Firman was already well into building up the car when the Lotus Jim Russell partnership broke up, the car being recalled.

The Van Diemen premises; the stores are on the left, beyond which is where the cars are built up.



in Lotus' own workshops. Firman went with it, but left later in the year, generally depressed by the set-up and backbiting that he found at Hethel.

With the many contacts that he had made in East Anglia and the motor racing business in general, Firman felt that the time was right to start his own preparation business, and in premises still in the Snetterton area, he set up business in June 1970. He took on Carlos Pace's Lotus 69 and by the end of the season, the future Surtees driver had amassed enough points to win the Forward Trust championship for the year.

With a staff of four, the following year saw the preparation business in full swing with two updated BT 28s to take 1.6 engines for those "two well-known shunting Brazilians" Ronnie Rossi and José Ferreira. Sandy Shephard was also on the books with a Brabham BT28 and Rikki von Opel was stepping into Formula 3 with a Lotus 69, showing signs of form on occasions, as Firman puts it. "I forget how many Brabhams we built that year," comments Ralph, showing what sort of year it was. 1972 was an abortive year for Firman, but apart from an excellent start, the only other high spot was that it saw the seeds of Van Diemen sown. Travisco Racing, headed by Colonel Kee with Barrie Maskell and Geddes Yeates as drivers kicked off the F3 season with a first and third at Mallory Park in Lotus 69s, which were by then, fairly dated. However, that form wasn't maintained as Travisco had to virtually disband due to financial problems and Firman was left without much work. But from Scotland came Donald MacLeod who, early in the season, had an F1 Lotus 69 converted to Formula Ford specification, and throughout the season, Firman tended the car when necessary. Driver and preparer were rewarded with the Scottish Championship and fourth in the BOC series, and the idea of building a Formula Ford was born.

Ralph had rebuilt quite a number of cars in his time, and one of his prerequisites was that the car should be strong in the driver area. It was important to have a practical car which was easy to drive but quick at the same time. With no engineering qualifications, Ralph describes the car as being "built rather than designed," but even so, the first customer on the doorstep, David McCullum had sufficient faith to take the first car on a preparation rent-a-drive basis without ever having seen drawings, car, chassis, body or anything.

Donald MacLeod was obviously one of the first people to know about the new car, and while keen to drive it, was not necessarily

financially kitted out to order a brand new car and have Ralph look after it. However, having appraised Don's performances during the previous season, Ralph felt that MacLeod had the talent and potential to be a champion ship winner this year and a deal was worked out whereby the pale blue Van Diemen was run by the works but entered in Don's name. It was a piece of talent spotting that couldn't have paid off better. MacLeod proved himself to be not only a competitive driver, but one who could sort out a car, and do the development work. "He was the one person who I felt could do the job, and he did it well," says Firman. "He's a driver who demands the car to be right. He doesn't adapt to the car, but knows what he wants and sorts it accordingly."



Don MacLeod proved himself a very able test driver, and won the BOC championship, came second in the STP series and won the FF festival, as well as carrying off a Grovewood award.

MacLeod's car was second off the production line and the third car to go to a British based customer was to Graham Cuthbert, who was to contest the Scottish championship. Cuthbert, who runs a family bakery business in Scotland, used to have his Lotus 69 Formula Ford car looked after by Ralph Firman during the previous year when the occasional problem arose. Cuthbert was another who bought the car unseen, and his performances this year have earned him the Scottish championship. Robert Joubert, too, has driven a car in this country although his appearances have been spasmodic. One car has been exported to Canada quite recently, and one has gone to the States, although the purchaser has never been heard of since and there's no record of performances nor successes. The rest have all gone to Austria, partly thanks to Firman's long standing relationship with Jim Russell and partially to the hard work of Max Bulla, the amiable Austrian who is now Van Diemen's agent in that country and Germany. Hans Binder has raced his Van Diemen in Jim Russell colours recently with Ford motor engine, and in fact won the last round of the Austrian championship with the car which theoretically should have given him the Austrian championship on points, but he changed his licence midway through the season to race in this country, and now finds himself ineligible to claim his full championship points.

Jim Russell, as a former employer of Ralph Firman's, has naturally taken a great deal of interest in the goings on across the road, and to some extent, the interest has been reciprocal. Jim Russell is always looking for cars to use in his schools, and with Van Diemen's proximity, repairs and spares are obviously no problem, while Ralph naturally regards many of the school pupils as potential customers but contrary to occasional rumour, Russell is no more than a customer. However, his faith is shown by the fact that he has ordered four cars for next year, while the order books also show that a further four will go to Austria, and one each to the States, Northern Ireland and also a home

customer.

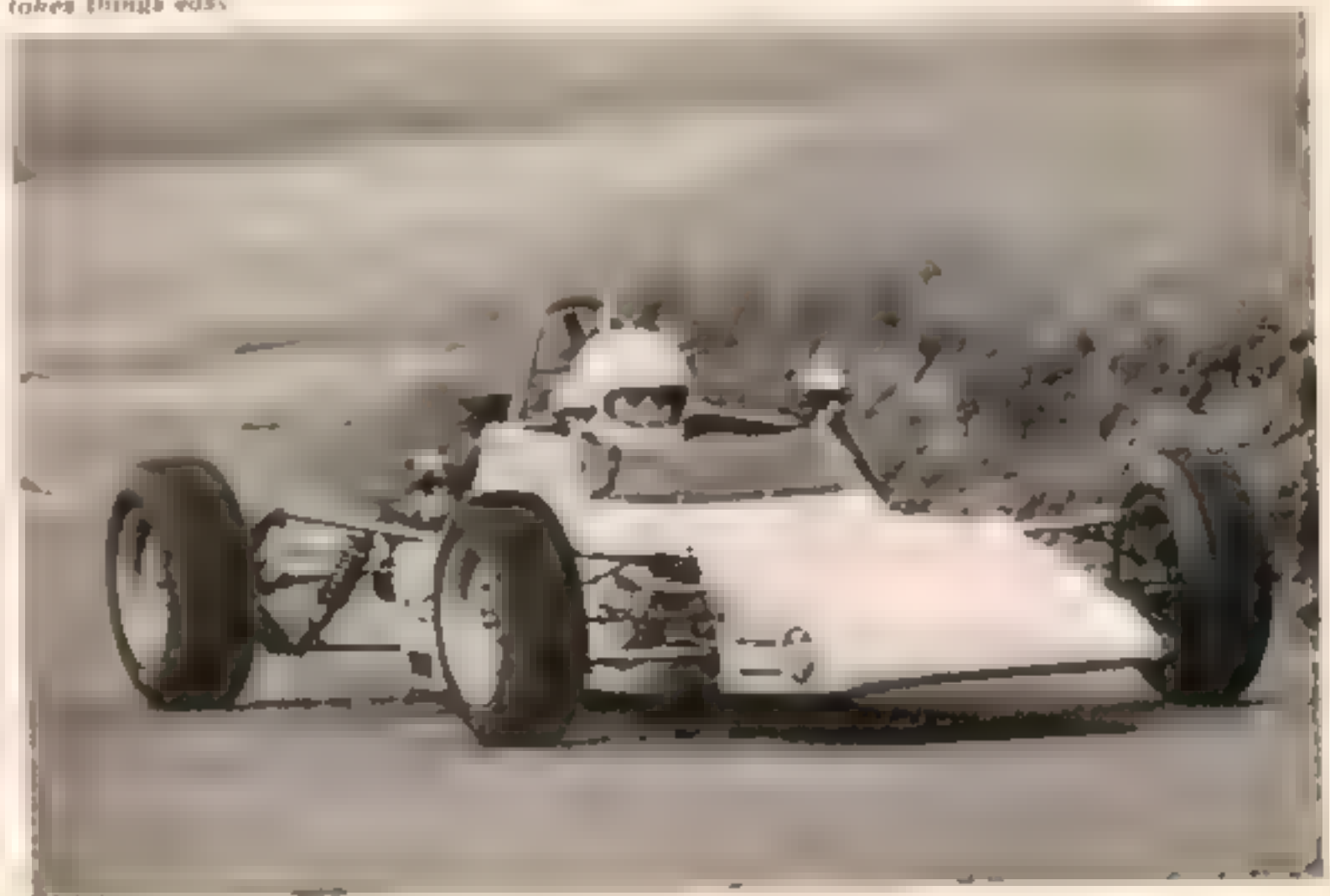
The cars themselves have been little changed since the first machine appeared. The spaceframe chassis is made up by Arch Motors, the well-known Huntingdon metalworkers and Ralph's relationship with them over the years guarantees an excellent service. The fibreglass bodywork comes from Motor Marianne, at nearby New Beckenham, while much of the engineering work of wishbones, machining, track rods and their own driveshafts is done by Griston Engineering. Most Van Diemens this year have been powered by Scholars, but although there's no tie-up with them, it is generally felt by Firman that the service gained is good, that they are honest (despite numerous strips, the Scholars have been found legal), and perhaps equally important, their premises are only a few miles away near Ipswich.

Once Arch Motors have supplied the chassis, it takes three days for Van Diemen to build up the car. The staff currently consists of Peter Merrilees, who has the grand title of production manager, Charlie Fry "sorcerer's apprentice," American Mike who runs the stores and does the parts chasing, and finally, should one be greeted by a touch of the brogue, then that'll be Ralph's wife Angie who mans the phones and typewriters. The chief racing mechanic, Graham "Wagga Wagga" Hepburn, who gave up pharmacy in Austria to go racing and has looked after the cars so well all season, has left as the racing season has quietened down.

Firman takes the spares situation very seriously. His orders are four months in advance, and he says he would rather not build a car if there were not a spare on the shelf. One part of which he needs for spares and a tweak on the suspension side, is the use of Ampeg joints which are usually used on Formula 2 cars, but which, on Formula Ford cars last much longer than less heavy duty models. On MacLeod's car, the joints were only replaced three times during the season.

Ralph gave Donald MacLeod's car a hefty shove across the A1 recently and allowed me to do a few laps of Snetterton on a fairly dry day. MacLeod has always praised the direct and precise handling of the Van Diemen, whereas some of the other cars he's driven, including Merlyn, Lotus and Dulon models of varying vintage, had a rather looser feel about them. My own limited experience certainly made me feel very quickly at home and there's no doubting that the straight line speed is as good as any. The car was easy to drive quite quickly and quite predictable, although I wasn't going too quickly because of the petrol crisis. But then on the other hand,

Even for the very amateur, the Van Diemen is quite easy to handle. Here the assistant editor takes things easy.



as Ralph says, the car is easy to drive, so perhaps I started with an advantage.

There have been certain doubts as to the design of the car, but it looks like a racing car. The side radiators have never been doubted as to their efficiency. The wide track has been under suspicion too, but this has been proven to be as quick in a straight line as any other, and the flat front nose has been as efficient as others. When MacLeod first tested the car, he felt that it had too much frontal downthrust from the flat nose but this was counteracted by adjustment to the rear end, and found efficient.

What's for Van Diemen in the future? Unlike others, Ralph Firman is backing a winner to be a winner next year. The car will remain strictly as it is, type numbered RF 74, although considerable testing will take place throughout the season, on a wide track version amongst others. Graham Cuthbert will become a works driver, contesting the continuing BOC series. Firman is reticent to reveal other formulas for which he may build cars, but those that will be considered during the season will be Formula Super Vee and Formula Atlantic, and should models appear, Ralph has every confidence in their success, because they will be built with the same thinking as this season's FF car.

In a way, Van Diemen have come out badly in this year's Formula Ford season for illegals have stolen some of the glory of their victories. Derek Lawrence won the final round with a query in the engine department from Croft on his engine builder, but despite the dubious engine it was Van Diemen in the chassis department who had won the championship. If he had protested then, could he have won that championship too? A question never to be answered, but suffice it to say that MacLeod overtook Syd Fox at Snetterton to claim second place in the Formula Ford festival from Lawrence, but the latter's engine was as at Croft, and Lawrence has since been disqualified (see P&P). A Van Diemen victory again.

Firman naturally feels such controversies very strongly. "Formula Ford has to be cleaned up otherwise it will be ruined," he says. "If manufacturers would give certain monies to have a scrutineer on hand at certain meetings. . . ." A thought that would allow us journalists to have confidence in our reports and manufacturers and engine tuners to have confidence and share the glories of their products. An unchallengeable word from a novice manufacturer, who hopes to do as much celebrating next year as this.

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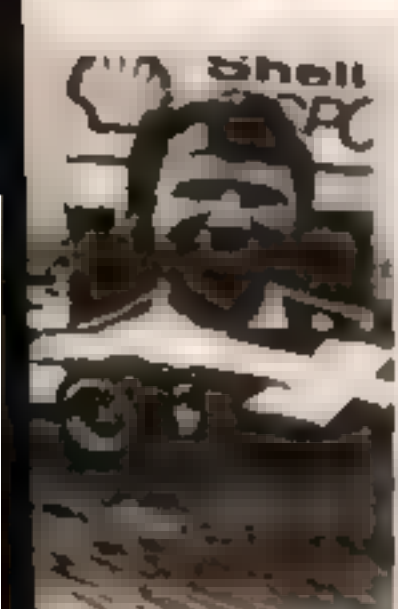
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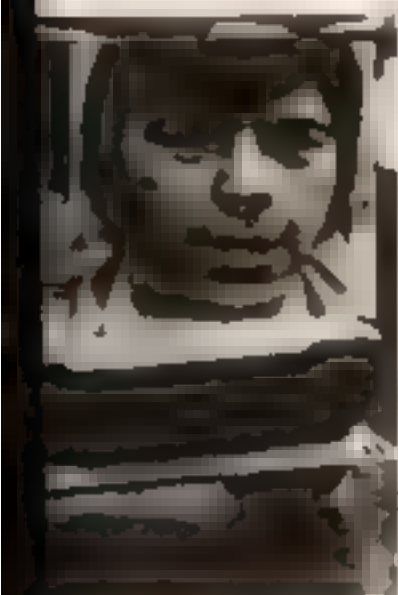
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This latest Aston Martin V8 is a very big car indeed. The ultimate in high speed luxury is its intended aim and the car has grown heavier with the years as yet more equipment has been added.

When Lionel Martin built his first car and drove it at Aston Clinton hillclimb, it was a very small vehicle. In the 1920s, when A. C. Bertelli took over the firm, the product was a 1½-litre sports car, though later a 2-litre was also produced. After the war, David Brown had acquired both Aston Martin and Lagonda, which was destined to have momentous results.

The Lagonda had an advanced 2½-litre six-cylinder engine and though this was normally condemned to propel a fairly ponderous car, it showed what a good unit it was when it was tried in the much more compact Aston Martin chassis. The result was the never-to-be-forgotten DB2, a streamlined coupé of very attractive appearance, which raced with great distinction and earned a golden reputation for high-speed reliability. When I first road tested a DB2 for *AUTOSPORT*, I realised that a really important new British car had arrived.

Since then, the Aston Martin has steadily moved away from this compact and simple sports car. The latest model, which I have just tested, is a very big car indeed. The ultimate in high-speed luxury is its intended aim and the car has grown heavier with the years as yet more equipment has been added. It seems rather wide for a machine of sporting pretensions and at first one feels that some of the charm of earlier Astons has been lost.

Yet, even a short drive proves that this ultra-luxurious vehicle is, above all, still a sports car. It has the sheer cornering power of light competition cars, with the responsive steering of the best vintage marques. In spite of its weight, it has acceleration which is outstanding even among the world's most exotic speed models. The great four-camshaft V8 engine produces horsepower aplenty and

Fuel injection replaced on Aston Martin's big V8

torque galore, though we are not let into the secret of just how powerful it is.

Something of a sensation has been caused by the abandonment of fuel injection for four twin-choke Weber carburettors. This is probably not unconnected with the difficulty of getting the injection serviced, but certainly the change is not at the expense of speed or acceleration. Fuel injection has theoretical advantages, of course, but evidently they were not realised in this particular application and the car is much more likely to give satisfaction to an owner living far from the factory, in its latest form.

A penalty of the new arrangement is the rather large air scoop on the top of the bonnet. This seems to obstruct the driver's view at first but is soon almost forgotten. Similarly, the car seems somewhat wide on narrow country roads and in busy towns, but on motorways it appears to shrink and one soon becomes accustomed to those few extra inches.

The car is beautifully made and has the sort of interior treatment, with plenty of real leather and lots of round instrument dials, that is expected in vehicles of this advanced price group. The driver's seat did not give

me enough thigh support, however, and I tended to slide forward. The power-assisted steering is remarkable because none of the feel has been lost, yet a small steering wheel is sufficient even for parking. Some kick-back can be felt at the wheel, which I greatly prefer to dead or excessively light steering.

The ride is hard at low speeds, with a good deal of bump-thump, but becomes extremely comfortable when the car gets into its stride—and what a stride! It is the acceleration from 130 mph to 150 mph that is so astonishing and I climbed an appreciable hill in 8th gear, accelerating all the way and going over the top at 155 mph on the remarkably accurate speedometer. The car will actually exceed 160 mph but this is really of no interest because the tyres must be blown up to 45 lb for such larks, or treads may be thrown. After a short run at this sort of speed, the tyres increased themselves to over 50 lb, which is neither good for ride nor roadholding. It seems more sensible to stick to the standard 35 lb and forgo the last few miles an hour.

At the high cruising speeds that come so naturally to the Aston Martin, the level of wind noise is extremely low. There is a good deal of road noise on some surfaces, however,

Road test

and sharp bumps can be heard. The engine has a powerful sound but is not really noisy, though distinctly audible when getting away on the lower gears. It is really quite quiet at sustained high cruising speeds. This is certainly the quietest car of this make that we have tested.

The roadholding is outstanding and the handling is altogether remarkable for so heavy a car. There is very little roll and the initial understeer may be converted to a tail-out attitude by the application of power. It is a well-balanced car and does not become skittish in the wet, as so many high-powered machines

do.

Once again, we meet the big ZF 5-speed gearbox. This component is lighter to handle than it used to be, though it prefers reasonably rapid rather than snatched changes. To handle all that torque, the clutch has to have strong springs and the pedal pressure is consequently high. The brakes have a mammoth task with so much speed and weight, but their performance is superb.

Though there is refrigerated air conditioning, it is not particularly easy to set the temperature to the required level and there is very little ram effect for the breathing air vents. The new headlamps are rather disappointing and there were earlier Astons that I have driven faster at night.

The latest Aston Martin is a car of great character which bears a famous name. It is neither cheap to buy nor to run, but that is not the object of the exercise. There are many wealthy men who prefer a car of conventional front-engine rear-drive type and certainly this one has quite a useful rear seat and more than adequate luggage space. The engine seems to be reliable and well behaved, though the starter is rather noisy. The handling, as I have already said, is a joy, and though I did hear a suspicious sound from the rear end, this can perhaps be pardoned in a hard-used car which has been thrashed by many motoring writers.

SPECIFICATION AND PERFORMANCE DATA

Car tested: Aston Martin V8 7 door 4 seater coupe.

Price: £9592.92 including car tax and VAT.

Engine: 2 litre 4 valves 100 mm x 85 mm (5540 cc).

Compression ratio: 9 to 1. Four chain driven overhead

camshafts. 4 twin choke downdraught Weber carburetors.

Transmission: Single dry plate clutch. 5 speed all synchro

mesh gearbox with central gear over ratios: 2.845

1.00 1.77 2.78 and 2.90 to 1. Hypoid final drive with

ratio of 3.44 to 1.

Chassis: Steel platform chassis with steel body frame.

Work and aluminium panels. Independent front suspension

with wishbones, coil springs, telescopic dampers and

anti-roll bar. Adjust power assisted rack and pinion

steering. On D on rear axle with paired trailing link

arms. Watts linkage, coil springs and lever type dampers.

Coil spring disc brakes, inboard at rear, with

twin discs. Bolt on light alloy wheels, fitted Avon

GR 70 VR 15 tyres.

Equipment: 12 volt lighting and starting with alternator.

Speedometer. Rev counter. Ammeter. Oil pressure, all

tem pressure, water temperature and fuel gauges. Clock.

Heating, demisting and ventilation system with heated

rear window and refrigerated air conditioning. 2 speed

and intermittent windshield wipers and washers. Radio

and tape deck. Reversing lights. Fog lights.

Dimensions: Wheelbase 8 ft 6.75 in. Track 4 ft 11 in.

Overall length 15 ft 3 in. Width 6 ft. Weight 1 ton

14.7 cwt.

Performance: Maximum speed 162 mph. Speeds in gears:

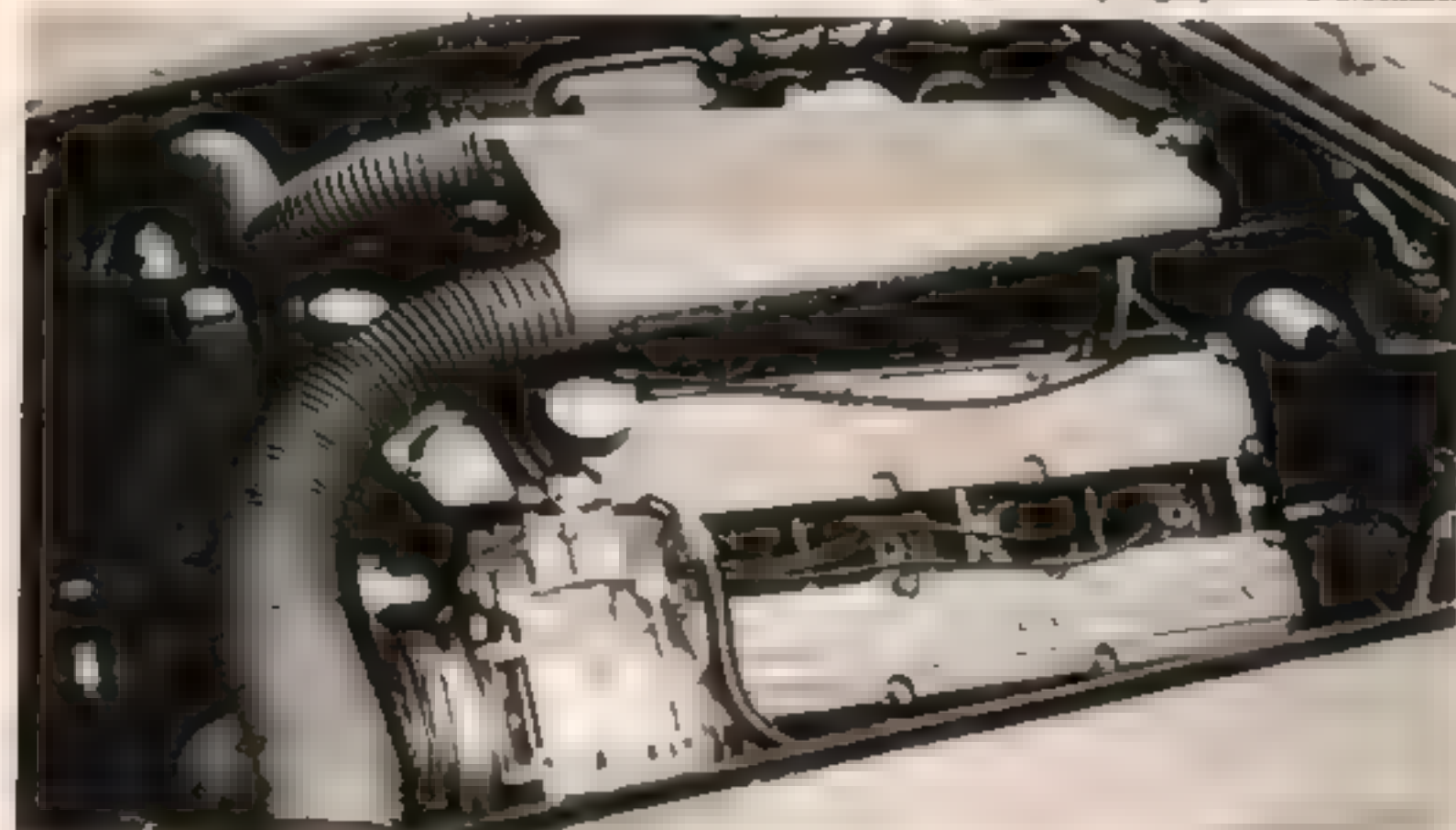
Fourth 134 mph, third 113 mph, second 76 mph, first

46 mph. Standing quarter in 14.0 s. Acceleration:

0-30 mph 2.4 s, 0-50 mph 4.6 s, 0-60 mph 5.6 s

0-80 mph 9.0 s, 0-100 mph 17.5 s, 0-120 mph 30.7 s.

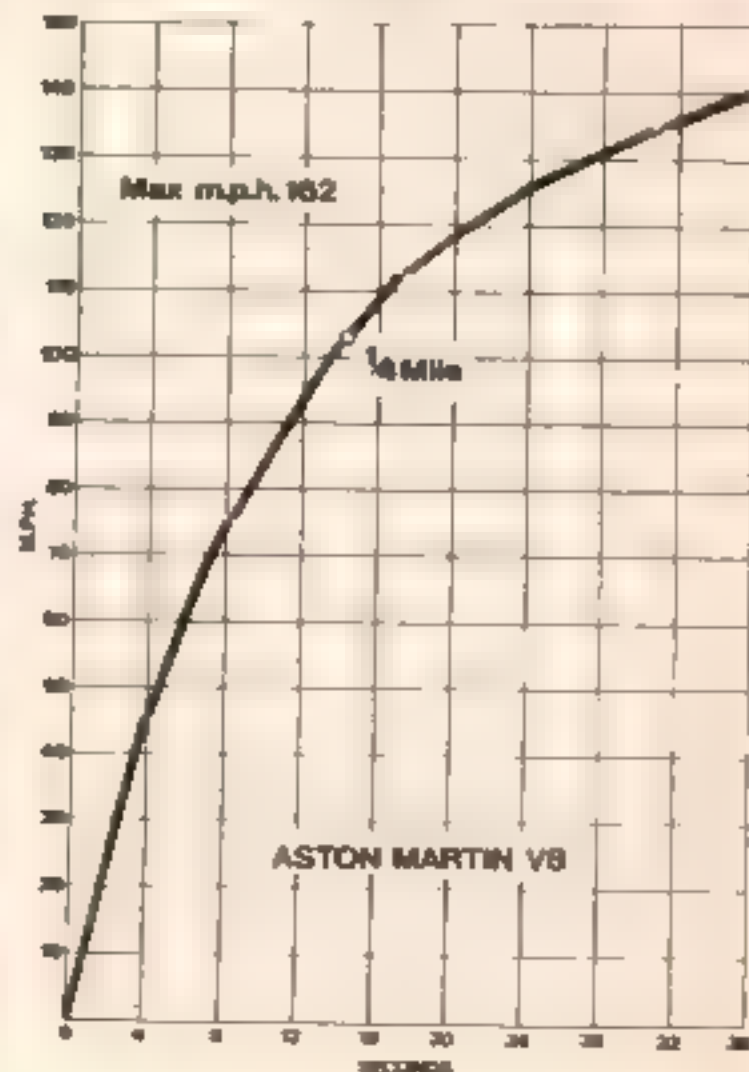
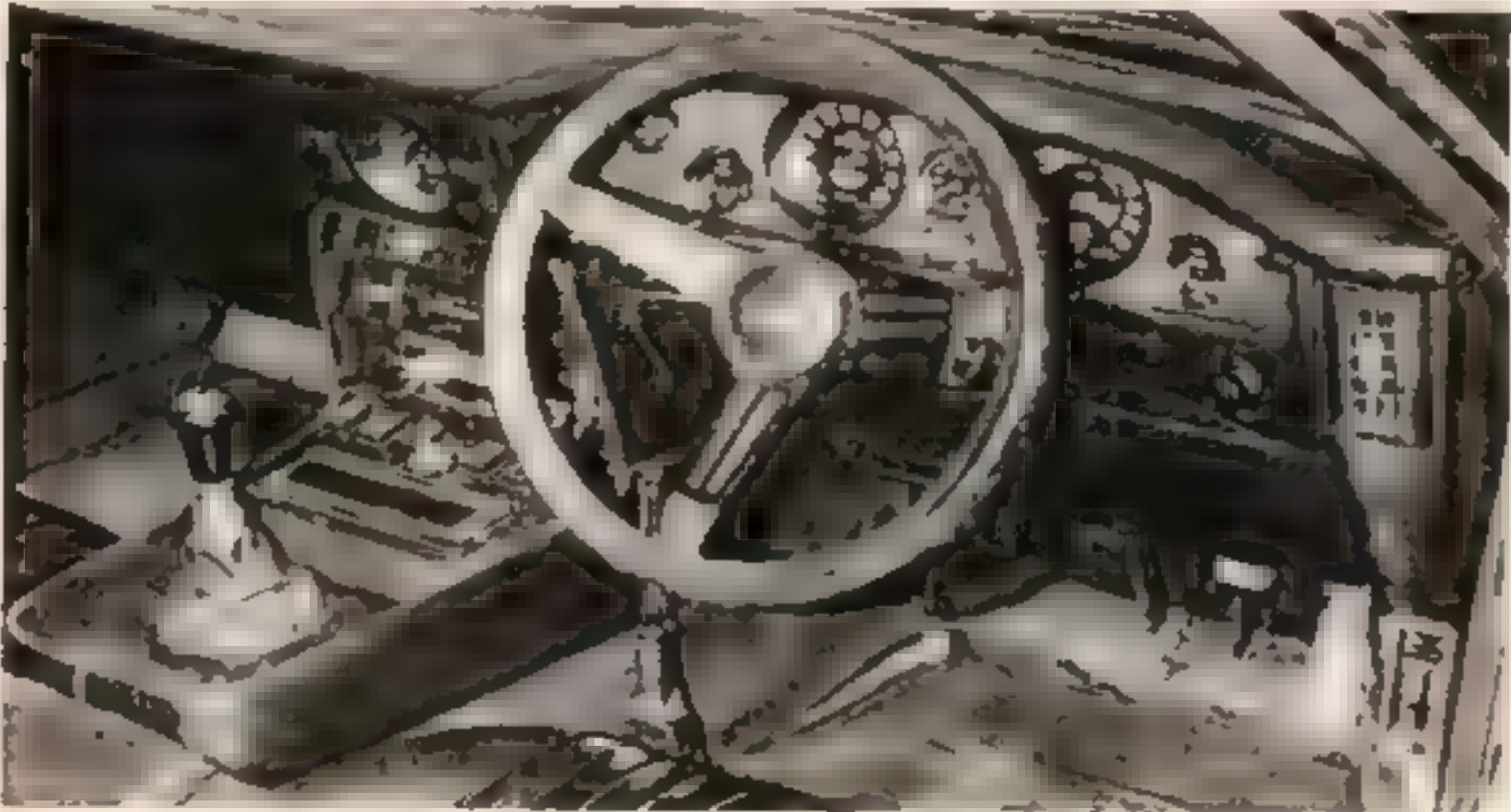
Fuel consumption: 12 to 15 mpg.



The great four camshaft V8 engine produces horsepower aplenty and torque galore while the fuel injection has been replaced by four twin-choke Webers. A penalty of this is the rather large air scoop on the top of the bonnet, below.



The car is beautifully made and has plenty of real leather and lots of round instrument dials.



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Team Aldon: Geoff Till's Prodsport Midget is on the left, with another on the right. Back row, left to right, Mike Flather, Don Loughlin, Geoff Till, Lyndon Thorne and Robert Goodwin are supported by Mike Flather's hillclimb car and Alan Goodwin sits on Thorne's Aldon FVA (front).

A performance accent on British Leyland

"Being out in the sticks I think we are often overlooked or ignored by the motor sporting press as a motor racing concern in our own right." So says Alan Goodwin, the AI of Aldon Automotive. Aldon are in fact based at Brierley Hill, Staffs on the south west of the Birmingham and West Midlands conurbation. If one can offer any criticism of Aldon it probably is of their location, being slightly inaccessible even to M1 and enthusiasts. However, with the M5, M6 and M1 now linked, access to this neck of the woods is vastly improved. Aldon are probably best known for their BMC, Spridget tuning and suspension tweaking although their range of activities is much more diverse than this as not only do they have their own highly successful racing team, they also have a Lotus service agency, machine shop, very busy rolling road diagnostic unit, etc all of which more anon.

But to start at the beginning we must go back to two eighteen-year-old motor racing enthusiasts working for BMC at Longbridge—Alan Goodwin, a Brummies, and Don Loughlin from Liverpool. After a while, each went off to university (Alan to Aston and Don to Birmingham) to gain their Bs in between working at Longbridge and dreaming of designing real cars—Don often drawing 18-valve tohc engines in works time! Alan was the budding racer however and started out campaigning an A35 in sprints and autocrosses with Don wielding the spanners. The entry to the race circuits was made in 1964 with a 1971 Cooper S in G3 trim which unfortunately coincided with the homologation of the 1275S and Alan had to content himself to a season of racing to be the first 1071 home. All this however convinced him that if Jackie Stewart could take all in F3 with a BMC engine, then so could he and a Lola BMC was acquired. This again unfortunately coincided with a

new homologation, the Ford MAE engine—and Alan had to content himself in vying to be the first BMC home and aim at Stewart's year old lap times. This was followed by an ex-works Targa Sprite which was then banned after a year under profile regulations—rather a racing career afflicted by homologation and rule changing! 1968 saw the (still famed in modsports circles) spaceframe Sprite take to the circuits. The thinking behind this move was that a demon short stroke engine was too expensive so a really well sorted and light chassis using a 1098 long stroke should be competitive. It was, of course, and was one of the quickest Spridgets seen—the 1150 Mallory record standing until 1972 and yet to be beaten

by a Spridget. It was other competitors' requests for Alan and Don to supply them with replica Spridget parts which brought about the formation of Aldon about four years ago although, of course, spaceframe Spridgets were banned from modsports and Alan's racing also came to a halt due to the pressures of running Aldon.

So Alan left the research dept and Don the engine design section at Longbridge to set up Aldon in part of Alan's father's factory making Spridget parts and carrying out servicing on competition and road cars. These premises were far from suitable and were outgrown in a year so a move to "a shack" in Halesowen was made. Here servicing and preparation continued as did the manufacture of suspension components for racing. Balancing, reboring, etc was growing at this stage and an involvement with modsports racing was always kept. A number of projects were undertaken at this time including supercharging the works Mini-Jem and work was started on Chris Williams' Windmill Plastic Triumph GT6 which is still to be seen on the circuits and is easily the quickest GT6

A typical piece of Aldon suspension equipment—a rose-jointed Spridget panhard rod.



Tune in

ever built. At this time Aldon were not really making any money but were becoming known and established. The dealership was acquired for John Alej rollover bars which they still have and of course is a secure market as people will always invert motor cars and Alej is the best respected name in this form of protection.

When Formula F100 (John Webb's "mini-CanAm" FF inspired sportscar category) was mooted, it seemed a good avenue for Aldon to branch into as they had a good name for sportscars. This was also their opportunity to become race car builders because a Spridget-based engine was obviously going to be the one to use. The gamble was taken and another shack was occupied as almost everything from the road upwards was manufactured. This resulted in the other activities being neglected as Don supervised the manufacture of beautiful monocoque chassis and fibreglass bodies, uprights, wishbones, discs, steering racks, etc to be made up by three or four people working full time. Orders came in but unfortunately a number of these failed due to bankruptcy of customers, etc and then, as is history, F100 foundered and failed after one season. The only Aldon car to survive all this was Lynden Thorne's which had had some encouraging outings but with no category, there were no customers. Although only Taffy Thorne's car remained, there are many of the Aldon components on assorted sportscars around and many Lotus 23s now owe more to Aldon than to Lotus. Thorne's car was subsequently converted to Sports GT form using a twin cam engine and has this year been equipped with a 1.3 FVA as part of Team Aldon.

Following the collapse of F100, Aldon had to pick up the pieces and restart their business and about 18 months ago things started moving again, but after their experiences Aldon would be very wary indeed about going into the building of complete racing cars again. Then, last September (1972), they moved to the present premises in a brand new building on a small industrial estate. A Cryphon Rolling Road Dynamometer was ordered and installed and has played an important role in being greatly in demand. Don is the wizard on this piece of equipment and with a capability of 250 bhp at the wheels most cars can be accommodated. Standard road cars can be tuned up and fully tweaked competition vehicles can be set up to obtain those last few bhp which are so important. Many local dealers use the Aldon rolling road as do many well known racing names such as Derek Lawrence, Graham Hopkins, Tony Harrison, Chrysters, etc and of course many Spridgets. The rolling road is also used for development projects by Aldon.

The Spridget and the rest of the MG range are still well catered for in the suspension tweaking departments whether you want stiffened springs, negative camber, panhard rods, raising, lowering, or the whole works with a coil spring rear end. Work on the Marina has also been started with a view to bringing its handling up to acceptable standards. The tweaking of the engine is of course as for either the Midget or MGB. The full treatment can be carried out on Minis as well right up to spacelane front, beam axle rear, 13 inch wheels, etc.

Aldon were recently appointed as Lotus Service Agents and this will complement the servicing of many high performance specialist cars already carried out on cars such as Alfa Romeo, Ferrari, BMW, Maserati, Jaguar, etc which is an aspect of business which Aldon are keen to expand. Alan sees in the future the possibility of being a Lotus dealer at a separate garage leaving the present premises free for competition activities. Although the Brierley Hill base is still looking very new and things are just beginning to sort themselves into some sort of order, an engine bay has been set up in which almost any sort of engine building can be carried

out—"A" series to DFV" as the advert says! Alan would like to do more work on the FVA and BDA and the new Lotus engine in the future.

Obviously racing car preparation is one of the main areas Aldon have always been involved in but due to losing a lot of money in the past, only specific jobs will now be tackled as development work can take a long time which cannot really be charged to the customer. Although Alan has now given up race driving due to having no time available Aldon have always had an active involvement and in fact Alan's father started autocross at the age of 50 and did incredibly well with a twin cam engine Spridget fitted with coil spring rear end and got into the Player's final two years running when aged 55! Mr Goodwin senior became a very popular figure locally but has now been forced to retire for health reasons.

This year, Team Aldon was set up and has been remarkably successful. Mike Flather's 998 cc supercharged Mini-Cooper has been running in the BARC/Castrol Hill Climb Championship and won it overall. Taffy Thorne has of course been running the 185 bhp 1.3 Aldon FVA in the MN/Castrol Sports GT Championship and won his class while in the controversial STP Production contest, Geoff Tili won overall in the Midget despite some late season problems and a very controversial incident at Mallory Park.

Alan's brother Robert has also been running a Midget in STP rounds and is soon to have a full race Cooper S with beam axle 13 in wheels, 10 in discs, etc. An amusing sideline to Team Aldon is that each car carries a "Clunk Click Every Trip" slogan and the drivers follow Jimmy Saville's advice and belt up for every race!

For the future Aldon will be concentrating on consolidating their present position of

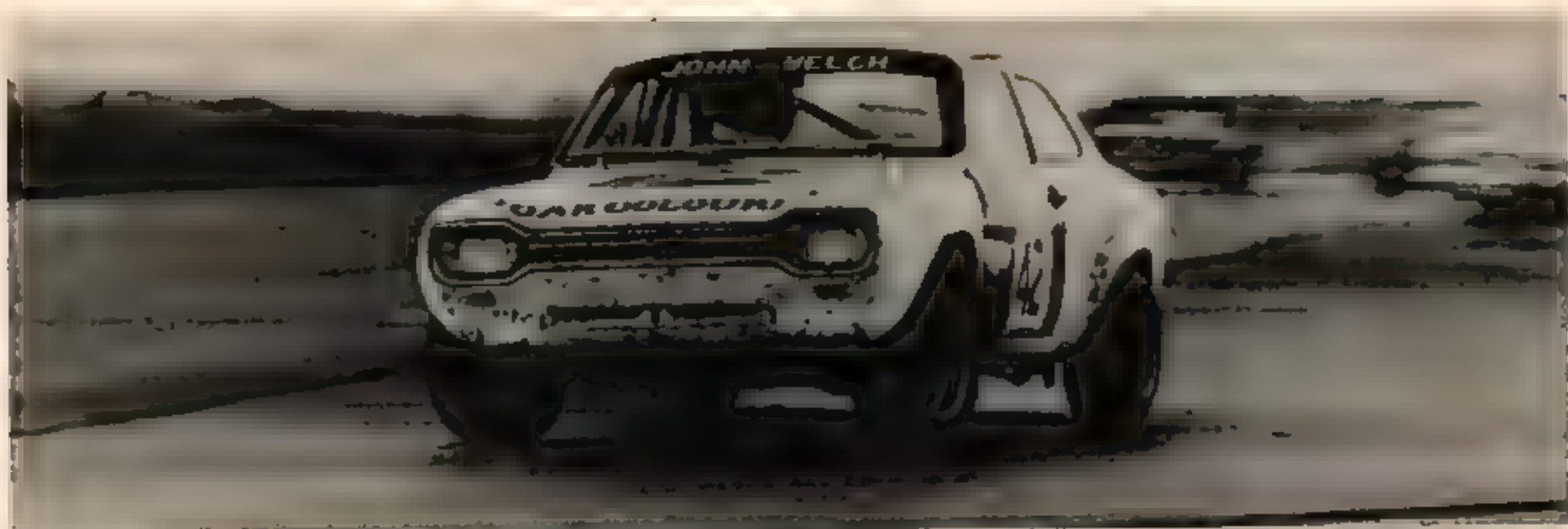
supplying performance equipment and racing parts mainly for sportscars, manufacturing suspension components, building engines, servicing specialist cars with the emphasis on Lotus and providing a fine rolling road service. One interesting project at the time of Autosport's visit was the development of a Sprint package for the Morris Marina which was instigated by a large BL dealer who hopes to market it on 18TCs for a little extra. Aldon have concentrated on the suspension and by subtle changes to ride height, anti roll bars, dampers, etc have transformed the Marina's rather non sporting handling into that of a very acceptable high performance road car. The engine is a little hotter than standard and the whole thing is finished off with alloy wheels and front and rear spoilers. Your writer was permitted to take the car for a brief trial which confirmed the suspicion that when it comes to suspensions, you really can't teach Aldon much. Although the understeer was still detectable on fast corners it was by no means bad as most road cars will display this characteristic. By the time this conversion is ready for announcement it will no doubt prove very popular and a back to back test with a standard car would no doubt be very enlightening.

Aldon are well known amongst the sportscar fraternity for their friendly helpful service and are always prepared to give advice. They should not be confused with any cheap back street conversion merchants as Aldon are only interested in doing a first-class job, whether it be on an F5000 or servicing a road car, which is something they have learnt from their racing background. Aldon are to be found on the Breener Industrial Estate, Station Drive, off Brettell Lane, Brierley Hill, Staffs (phone Brierley Hill 78508).

PETER RICHINGS

Mike Flather's supercharged Cooper rushes uphill to yet another Castrol/BARC hillclimb championship win.





Setting up his Escort in quite a spectacular manner on the tarmac is John Welsh, who finished third (above). Roger Dawson's Dolomite-engined GT6 negotiates the chicane (below right)

CROFT

Taylor slashes record — Jesty's good showing

Last Sunday saw the second round of the Martins Group/Tenaxo Rallycross Championship take place at Croft on a fine, cold day with a slight breeze. There were a lot of non-starters out of nearly 80 entries, and only 21 cars made timed runs. The races were run off slickly by the Darlington and District Motor Club, although it remains to be seen what time the meeting would have finished if the full entry had turned up! The course was very fast, and John Taylor confirmed the ideal conditions by taking 4.8 s off his own lap record on his first run, then taking a further 4 s off that time with a fantastic second run, leaving the record at 3 m 30.2 s. Nick Jesty again had a good day, equalling Taylor's old record of 3 m 39 s on his first run and beating that by exactly 2 s (the only driver to do so) on his second run, to take second place overall. John Welsh took third with a 3 m 41 s, and also won the knockout competition from Robin Kinnear and Judith Jesty.

The first race of the day saw the lap record broken, John Taylor leading from flag to flag from Phillip Lilley. Rex Hanson spun his Hillman Imp down to last place. Nick Jesty shot away to win Event 2 with 3 m 39 s, during which John Forrest rolled his Escort, but was unhurt. Event 3 saw a good dice between Keith Stones and Brian Stabler. Stones led initially but was taken by Stabler on lap two, Stabler being lucky to hang on to his lead after getting crossed up on the cinders of the motor racing paddock. Stabler crossed the line 1.2 s ahead of Stones, who was followed by Pete Hemmings and Keith Hulme.

Event 4 was led at first by the Escort of John Welsh. Iain Williams gave notice that he did not like Casino Bend by spinning his smart Manxpermi Mini on lap one, then making a real job of it on lap two and rolling in exactly the same place. Iain was, luckily, unhurt, but the car was a sorry sight as it was towed back to the paddock. The marshals were right on the spot and the race was stopped immediately, to be re-run later. Event 5 was won in 3 m 43 s by Robin Kinnear, with Mick Bird 3.6 s behind in his Mini. George Warren was third. In Event 6 Rodger Dawson led right through the race with his Dolomite-engined Triumph GT6, chased hard by the Mini of Will Gollop. However, Dawson did what he had threatened to do previously and spun away his lead on the last corner, letting Gollop through to win in 3 m 51.2 s. Dawson recovered to take second place in 3 m 52.6 s. Gilbert Ritchie went past slowly and retired, and Dudley Stock had an

excursion and also retired. Despite a push-start Alan Evans had to retire his Mini at the start of Event 7, and this left John Cockerill, Wayne O'Connor and Ian Poggett to do battle. They finished in that order, with Cockerill logging a 3 m 54 s. To complete the first runs Event 8 was re-run and was won by Chris Fishwick in 3 m 42.6 s, the time which was to earn him sixth place overall. He was followed home by Pip Carrotte, going uncharacteristically slowly, and Iain Gardner. John Welsh had gone straight on at Tower on lap two and retired.

The eighth race on the programme was the first of the second runs, and John Taylor again came out to do his thing. He absolutely romped away with a demon drive, to leave the lap record nearly 9 s faster than at the start of the meeting. This, perhaps, overshadowed the good second place of Robin Kinnear, who did a respectable 3 m 42 s. Event 9 saw Keith Stones win by exactly 2 s from Mick Bird, who had demoted John Cockerill's Escort to third place. Stones' time was 3 m 44.8 s, nearly 10 s faster than his first effort. Nick Jesty drove very rapidly in Event 10 to get 2 s inside the old lap record, which he equalled in his first race, and his 3 m 37 s ensured him of second place overall. A long way behind came Dave Puell. Frank Greenway, Stephen Brewitt and Keith Hulme, all well spread out. Event 11 was won by George Warren from Brian Stabler, after a good chase. Warren improved by over 11 s on his first race time, and his 3 m 41.6 s was good enough for fourth place overall.

In Event 12 Rodger Dawson made no mistake this time, and took a deserved win, from Keith Fowler, who had come up from third place after a spin. Dawson improved to 3 m 46 s. John Welsh did enough in Event 13 to net third place overall, with a 3 m 41 s. He won by a long way from Judith Jesty. Chris Fishwick again won his race but could not match his first run time, this time recording 3 m 48.4 s. He was followed home by Pip Carrotte, Iain Gardner and Alan Thurlow's unusual Lightspeed Magenta.

This 14th race completed the championship runs. A Martins Group cavalcade was then led around the circuit by George Hill's RAC Rally Firenze, which proceeded to lap the entire field! The Knockout Competition was run in the same way as last time, with the first three cars from each heat going into the next round, ending in a six-car final. John Welsh made sure of his semi-final place in the first heat, as did Judy Jesty and John Clarkson, after Nick Jesty and Brian Stabler spun on



lap one. Welsh recorded a leisurely 3 m 59 s. George Warren, David Potter and Frank Greenway were the qualifiers from Heat 2, the only other finisher being Allan Forrest, after Iain Gardner and Gilbert Ritchie went missing.

Heat 3 had to be re-run after Pete Hemmings rolled his Mini. Roger Dawson spoiled his day when he went straight on at the Esses and hit something solid, leaving Robin Kinnear, John Cockerill and Wayne O'Connor to go through. The qualifiers from Heat 4 were Mick Bird, Alan Thurlow and Stephen Brewitt, after Dave Puell stopped on the circuit. The first semi-final saw the Escorts of George Warren and John Welsh chased home by Judith Jesty, and these three qualified. The lucky three from the second semi-final were Mick Bird, Robin Kinnear and John Cockerill. The fast conditions were reflected in the cars for the final: four Escorts and two Minis. They stormed off as one, however, when the flag dropped, until Judith Jesty spun and Mick Bird got involved and had to retire. Judy carried on, mixing it with the Escorts, and did well to finish third, albeit a good way behind winner John Welsh and second man Robin Kinnear. John Cockerill finished fourth, and George Warren eventually struggled home with a sick motor.

As people made their way back to their cars or to the clubhouse to thaw out, one hoped that this was not going to be the last rallycross at Croft this season. The organisers and sponsors are reasonably optimistic, and plans are tentatively going ahead for the next round, scheduled, petrol permitting, for Boxing Day, December 26.

JOHN HORNBY

Martins/Tenaxo Rallycross Championship (round 2) 1. John Taylor (2.0 Ford Escort), 3 m 30.2 s (record). 2. Nick Jesty (1.4 Mini) 3 m 37 s. 3. John Welsh (1.6 Ford Escort) 3 m 41 s. 4. George Warren (1.5 Ford Escort) 3 m 41.6 s. 5. Robin Kinnear (1.7 Ford Escort) 3 m 42 s. 6. Chris Fishwick (1.3 Mini) 3 m 42.6 s. 7. Brian Stabler (1.3 Mini), 3 m 43.4 s. 8. Keith Stones (1.3 Mini Cooper) 3 m 44.8 s. 9. Mick Bird (1.3 Mini Cooper) 3 m 46 s. 10. Pip Carrotte (1.3 Mini Cooper) 3 m 46.6 s. Knockout Competition: 1. Welsh 2. Kinnear 3. Judith Jesty (1.3 Mini). Martins/Tenaxo Championship positions: 1. Taylor, 20 pts; 2. M. Jesty 18; 3. Warren, 11; 4. Bird 9; 5. Tony Drummond 8; 6. Welsh 8; 7. Kinnear, 7; 8. Phillip Lilley, 6; 9. Carrotte and Fishwick, 5.

Bandama bonanza

That rally with no finishers the Bandama Rally in the Ivory Coast, looks like being even more interesting this year. Peugeot have relaxed their boycott and Tony Fall-Gerard Flocon, Hannu Mikkola/Jean Todt and Bernard Consten X will drive 504s for them. These cars should be even better than before for both Mikkola and Timo Makinen have twice been to Morocco testing them. Jean-Pierre Jabouille will be driving a Renault Alpine and

Jean-Francois Piot a Renault 17 TS while the Datsun effort will be headed by Shekhar Mehta. Claes Billstam in a 240Z with no less a person than Gerard Larrousse in a 180B. The only catch to this tough dirt road marathon is that it takes place over Christmas for much the same reason that the Safari takes place at Easter—the availability of amateurs to marshal and run the event.



Arne Hertz (left) leaves his usual link with Saab and Stig Blomqvist (right) to join Toyota.

Hertz for Toyota

In case you think that this is an item slipped in from the commercial section, what we mean is that Arne Hertz has left Stig Blomqvist and the Saab team and will drive next season with Ove Andersson in the Toyota team. Their team mates will be Bjorn Waldegaard and Hans Thorselius so if the car can be made quick enough, it is a sufficiently talented team to give results. However, Andersson seems to be having problems getting through to the Japanese and has to have a big fight to get anything which is not Japanese on the car. Two rallies ago it was Minike wheels, then

it was Blstein shock absorbers and struts and on the RAC, it was a big discussion to use British Dunlop rather than the Japanese version. Still he is making progress and he is a very determined gentleman. First rally for the team should be the Swedish Rally which looks to be unaffected by the petrol crisis and then the TAP Rally which might easily have to be cancelled should the Arabs refuse to relax their present restrictions.

Within the Saab team, a replacement has already been arranged for Blomqvist but his name has not yet been formally announced.

The end of the Barwarrton stage was the scene of much jumping. One of the highest were Alan and Kivimaki in the 1974 C&S Escort during their excellent performance. Alan set fastest time on 20 of the special stages.



Ford instigate the Indoor Rally series

Ford have taken an early initiative to help lift a little of the "no rallying" gloom and have organised a National Indoor Rally Championship. The paper work rallies, one in January, February and March will act as qualifiers for national finals to be held over April/May. The rallies will be planned to cover all the thorny problems that a team manager or rally crew might meet during a typical event—plotting, arranging service and fuel points etc. The only equipment required will be an OS map, a pencil and a roller calculator. Entries will be free (unless the club making the entries wishes to charge competitors). There will be no age limits and competitors need not

even hold a competition licence. Individual competitors can only enter on behalf of one club.

To make it worth while keeping the brain cells exercised there is a range of prizes, going down to 10th overall. For the overall winner of the championship there will be an expenses-paid trip to the 1000 Lakes Rally with Ford. Second place will be rewarded with a voucher for £80 worth of Rallye Sport parts and third place gets a £30 voucher. Fourth to 10th all receive rally jackets. The championship will be organised by the Ford Rallye Sport Club and entry forms are incorporated in the Ford announcement elsewhere in this issue.

New major Irish assault

Main Ford Dealers for Derry Desmond's of Derry, have formed a Desmond's of Derry Rally Team and with driver Pat McCourt a programme of major British and Irish rallies is planned next year. The new car, an RS1600 with 1800 BDA Cosworth engine and ZF box, has already had a couple of outings with the Castrol Special Stages Rally in Co Wex-

ford and the FIT Cork 20 Rally, and a further outing to help sort the car is planned before the 1974 rally programme commences. Twenty-four-year-old Pat McCourt has been rallying for three years and has always been associated with Fords. Navigator will be 20-year-old Derek Smyth, a student of Queen's University, Belfast.

A new map light for rallyists

A new map light, suitable for co-drivers' use has been marketed by Pointsource Ltd. Known as the wedgelight the lamp consists of a tapered perspex panel illuminated by tiny bulbs in one of the edges. This gives a bright but soft illumination of an area of about eight by five inches. A cigar lighter plug is provided on a telephone coil type flex which allows the user lots of freedom.

We have tried this map light and can recommend it as suitable for rally use. When maps are being marked by pencil the light can be placed under the fold to give near perfect illumination. Cost of the Wedgelight is £4.95. It is available from Pointsource Ltd at 102-104 Hammersmith Road, London W6 7JP. 55p should be added for post.

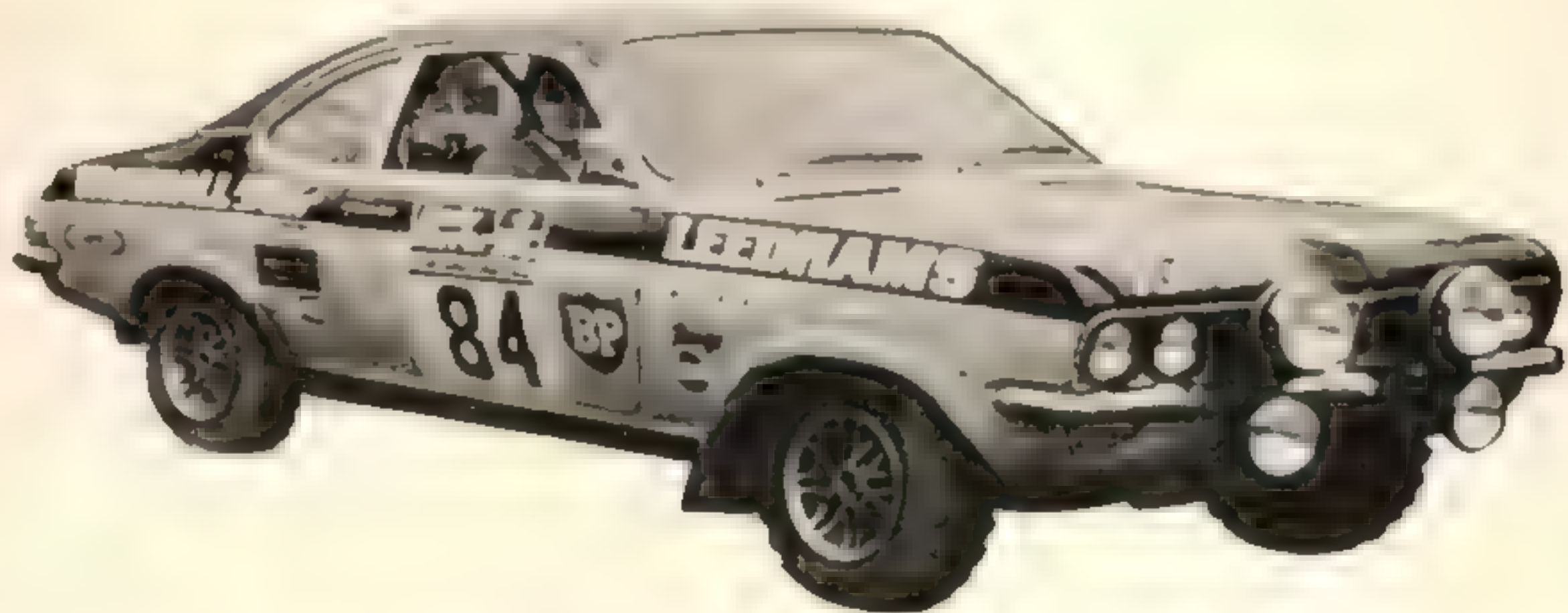
End of the RAC Rally at Dodd for the Barry Lee Escort



Winners-Class 7

RAC International Rally of Great Britain.

Vauxhall Motors congratulate Pip Dale and
Richard Stark on winning Class 7 (Group 2 cars over 2 litres)*
in their Firenza 2300.



The class winning Firenza, entered by Leedhams (York) Ltd,
Vauxhall Main-Dealer and recently appointed
DTV Sport Dealer.



Vauxhall

*Results subject to confirmation

Special stage

Jimmy Rae takes top Kleber-Wheelbase award

Announced at the Skyline Hotel, London Airport, on Tuesday night were the three winners of the Kleber/Wheelbase Rally Scholarship for 1973. The driver voted first by a panel consisting of Brian Robins, Henry Liddon, John Davenport, Barrie Gill, Mike Greasley and Peter Ashcroft, was Scottish Ford driver, Jimmy Rae. His prize of a works Escort RS on loan will be the ex-Mikkola RAC Rally car. In addition to the car is £4,000 running expenses for a 1974 rally programme and £500 worth of parts from Ford. Runners-up Tony Pond and Barry Lee receive £300 and £250 respectively.



JIMMY RAE

Twenty-seven-year-old Jimmy Rae, though something of an unknown quantity to southern drivers, has dominated the Scottish rally scene in recent years and, driving an RS1600 for the past three seasons, his stage times have consistently shown he is not only the quickest Scottish driver but also one of Britain's quickest. Jimmy first started rallying back in 1965 with a Mini but only started to be successful when he switched to a Ford in 1969, going on to become Scottish Rally Champion in 1970 with his astonishingly quick Escort 1300GT—beating many Twin Cam drivers on the way. Towards the end of '71 with the 1300GT outpaced by the RS1600s even in Jimmy's hands, a similar RS1600 was prepared for the following season. It turned out to be a most successful move for both the driver and his employers and sponsors, Ford Dealers Frew's of Perth, and in 1972 Jimmy Rae once again became the Scottish champion; this time without winning any single event in the series but by always finishing consistently high in the results. Last year was not smooth for this talented Scottish driver and the result of the Kleber/Wheelbase Scholarship should go a long way to establishing Rae with the recognition he deserves.



TONY POND

Tony Pond from Uxbridge, Middlesex, is a most worthy runner-up in the Kleber/Wheelbase Scholarship. Tony has worked hard to become one of Britain's most promising drivers. His career has been punctuated by spells without a car as Tony for a long time was his own errand boy. A sprint entered in 1966 with an MGB near Bagshot was Tony's introduction to motor sport and after winning his class the ball started rolling. Tony rallied a Cortina GT before moving on to a Mini-Cooper "S" with which he made his name on both road and stage rallies. After the Mini, Tony campaigned a Cortina Lotus, built to works specification, and in his efforts to stay competitive with the quicker Escorts, Tony hit financial trouble and for a while gave up the sport completely. The sport was certainly not through with Tony though and an offer from Norman Reeves Motors to drive a Mexico on championship events put Tony back on the road again. An RS1600 followed and this year Tony Pond has given superb driving performances with the car on RAC Championship events. The Scottish Rally also served as a platform for his skills after bringing home his works-loaned RS1600 into seventh place, a car he had never driven before the



Jimmy Rae in spectacular sideways fashion in the Frew's of Perth Escort.



BARRY LEE

Barry Lee just had to feature in the Kleber/Wheelbase awards. At 29 years of age Barry has more motor sport experience under his belt than many drivers would be glad to gain in a lifetime. Barry's first contacts with the sport involved go karts, speedway motor cycles and some horse riding for good measure. In 1965 Barry started on the road up with an Anglia for autocrossing. Barry went on in the following years to dominate the autocross and rallycross scene, winning the major titles before turning his hand to Hot Rod racing. Again Barry was completely successful and only this year added to his long list of

championship wins in this sport the World title. Barry's first bash at rallying started in a similarly spectacular way—coming third overall on the 1969 Tour of Dean special stage rally. All the while Barry was concentrating on rallycross and then hot-rodding he kept his hand in with rallies, always with good results and earlier this year signed to drive Clarke and Simpson's new Centre Hotels rally car. Barry drove to team orders on the four rallies preceding the RAC and returned a high overall placing in each. Barry looks all set to make an even bigger impression next year.

Mexico standings

The Mexico Championship of 1973 was of 14 rounds with only two events in the final quarter due to petrol shortage. Results are as follows: 1, Nigel Rockey, 101 points; 2, Russell Brookes, 92; 3, John Edwards Parton, 79; 4, Bob Bean, 73; 5, John Barter, 53; 6, Dai Roderick, 28; 7, Roland Young, 23; 8, Keith Watkinson, 22; 9, John Collins, 18; 10, Andy Dawson, 17. Andy Dawson wins RS1600 ride for best final quarter.

RAC Championship points

1, Roger Clark, 99 points; 2, Jack Tordoff, 30; 3, Adrian Boyd, 23; 4, Andrew Cowan, 18; 5, Cahal Curley, 14; 6, Tony Fowkes, 12½; 7, Bill Taylor, 10; 8, Peter Clarke, 8½; 9, Ronnie McCartney, 8; 10 (equal), Tony Pond and Barry Lee, 7.

Clan correction

An item which appeared in Special Stage in the November 1 issue was incorrect in referring to The Clan Motor Company as liquidated. Clan are continuing in production as before and their crisis appears to have been only temporary.

Makinen's economy drive

An RAC official checks the remaining fuel in a standard Escort 1100 which RAC winners Timo Makinen and Henry Liddon drove from York to London at the recommended 50 mph speed limit, after the rally. They averaged 47 mpg and 47 mph for the 4 h 31 m journey.



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BRANDS HATCH

Reduced races lengthened!



Rob Haigh's MGA spins out of Druids, causing a dramatic moment for Hussain's Camaro (above). John Brice's F3 March comes under pressure from Hyatt Baker's Huron



With the threat of petrol rationing drawing closer and the ominous appearance of the National Press, motor racing showed its awareness of the situation by reducing the length of all of the seven events run by the Romford Enthusiasts' Car Club "by 20%." Thus all the events except the Libre race were run over 5 laps in order to go some way towards negating the whinings of the motor racing killjoys. Unfortunately this easy situation was somewhat marred by the fact that due to the diabolical weather conditions during much of the afternoon's sport, competitors were allocated an obligatory 3 laps warm-up instead of the usual one lap, thus restoring the mpg status quo. Many drivers unwittingly took it upon themselves to "do their bit" in the crisis however—and the many spins and shunts undoubtedly helped boost the rather dubious nature of the Brands Hatch economy run.

Sunday dawned cold, clear, sunny and still. However, by the time the last competitors were completing their practice session, the only variable to remain approximately static was the temperature. A delectable mixture of snow and hail brought back memories of the year's Race of the Champions, and the track, which had been fairly dry apart from a

very slippery Druids for most of practice, greeted the competitors with a lot of standing water and a very treacherous surface. With the prospect of the failing light and probable need to collect bent machinery after each race, not many people were too optimistic about the organisers' chances of completing the programme, but they did with commendable efficiency.

First event of the day was a Mini-Seven Direct Racing Supplies Championship event—and on the front row alongside Mick Moss, the uncatchable champion on pole position—were Geoff Gilkes and Chris Tyrrell. To the accompaniment of vast amounts of wheelspin the field weaved its way into Paddock from which Moss emerged in the lead. Some real knife-edge motoring through Bottom Bend helped pull out a useful lead on Gilkes and by the end of the first lap, Moss led strongly from Gilkes, Moorehead, Heudebourck, Finn and Mancey. Gilkes spun away his chances of getting back on terms with Moss on the second lap. Moorehead inherited second place, and Gilkes became involved in a long tussle with Tim Guest in the Target Mini. Moss only took the flag at 8 laps having picked his way carefully and smoothly through a number of spinning Minis. Heudebourck was a distant

second followed by Mancey, Finn and Guest.

The first of the mixed special saloon and modsports races followed and on pole position was Bob Jarvis' Davrian Mk 3, with John Homewood's Kent Messenger Imp and Sedric Bell's 16-valve Allen Mini beside him, Bell was unhappy with the handling of his new car, having badly bent the front subframe against the Armco at Oulton Park the week before. This misfortune plus his lack of knowledge of the way round Brands kept him from being fully competitive, but he still was practising within a second of Homewood. The Imp was first into Paddock bend and the race proved to be another Homewood benefit—John driving immaculately to finish just over 2 s up on the Davrian which after being fourth, first time round into Druids never really managed to get on terms with him, although the Imp was effectively without rear brakes from the first lap. As the field came up to complete the third lap, Jarvis took Mo Mendham's Mini on the exit from Clearways for second place, and the positions of the first four remained the same to the finish—Bell just failing to catch Mendham on the line after a race-long dice for third place.

The afternoon's Formula Ford activities proved to be a nightmare for those who happened to be taking lap charts that afternoon. Bob Arnott joined several drivers who didn't appear on Sunday and pole position was credited to the Peruvian, Jorge Koechlin (Elden PH10C) with Syd Fox in the Rowland engined Hawke DL11 and pop star man Ken Hensley in the Dulon making up the front row. At the end of the first lap after numerous "moments" and spins throughout the field, including Koechlin who spun at Paddock, the order was Arif (Merlyn Mk 20A), with Syd Fox trying to get inside him at the entrance to Paddock, followed by Barry Aitkenhead (Rostron), Roger Finch, Freddie Jacks and Brian Songhurst in his Royale RP3A. By the second lap Syd Fox was firmly established in the lead from Arif and Aitkenhead and these three had already pulled out a long and permanent gap on the pursuing multitude who were now led by Songhurst, Jacks' Merlyn, Finch's Rader and Rupert Keegen in the BAF Royale. Apart from demonstrating Syd Fox's superiority, the race saw an interesting dice between Arif and Aitkenhead and a fine drive through the field by Koechlin who, having restarted at the back, finally suffered the disappointment of a dead engine on the penultimate lap.

The combined Miglia and special saloon cars up to 850 cc race produced some close racing and was eventually won by Phil Spurling's 998 Mini from Sid Ryder and a disappointed Eric Groves. After John Hazell lost it in a big way at Clearways on the first lap, Groves led from a determined Phil Spurling, Ryder, John Watson and David Brason—all in Mini Miglias. As the leaders came out of Clearways to start their fourth lap, Spurling managed to pass Groves and as they went into Druids the two cars touched and Groves lost a lot of time. He managed to keep going but a plug had oiled up and he struggled round to finish third on three cylinders, being caught by Ryder before the flag.

Fifth race of the day was Act 2 of the combined special saloon and modsports drama, and this race provided the sparse crowd with the spectacle of what can be done on a very wet track. Master of ceremonies was Gerry Marshall who flung the Firenze around the circuit to lead from start to finish, leaving behind a struggling Tony Nash, battling with his errant Mustang. On lap 5 at Kidney he lost it and second place, to the Vickers Mini of Ian Bax; and on the last lap he spun again, this time at Paddock, losing another place to Jeff Allam's Viva GT. Meanwhile, Gerry Marshall reeled off the necessary laps in fine style to finish 31 s ahead of Bax. Ali Hussein's Camaro completed a largely incident-free race

SILVERSTONE

Another BTD for Corfield



MGs queue up for the start of their runs at the MGCC Silverstone sprint.

There was good news and bad news at the MG Car Club's round of the five-event Silverstone Sprint Championship on November 17. Good news was that the competition in most of the classes was as hot as before, that John Corfield again took BTD and that the day was fine and enjoyed by all. The bad news was that the regulations were still being flouted in the road-going classes with at least one full-race car turning up with apparently false number plates and tax disc to run in a class for everyday road cars.

Malcolm Allen's Mini-Miglia formula Mini 1000 cc once more romped away in the small road-going class with Angus and Angela Martin's blatantly modified-for-the-event Mini Clubman in close pursuit, Angela beating her father by 2 s this time, to take second place and consolidating her position in the Ladies' Championship which she leads with 128 s points. Pauline Richardson in the "Hix Garage hack" 1275 'S' beat husband Ian in the 1300 cc class whilst a mighty battle raged for third place between the Alfa Romeo of Jon Dooley and Nigel Rosser who were within a second of each other on their first runs and only 0.2 s apart on their second. Dooley just scraping home in a rather dated-looking Giulietta. Two cars tied for the over 1300 cc road-going saloon car class, Barry Waterhouse's Lancia Fulvia matching exactly with David Harvey's Escort RS1600 on the first run. Both went less quickly on their second attempts and so failing to resolve the tie.

Allan Cox's John Brown Motors Ltd-entered 1000 cc Cooper S was back on form again to shave a win on the second run from Basil Dage's immaculate Imp which, like Alan's car, is more usually seen rushing uphill somewhere. John Whitton's much-raced 'S' tied for third place with Mike Kirby's Imp, with Jean Cox close behind in Alan's class-winning car. Second of the racing saloon classes was for up to 1300 cc cars and David Carvel's almost concours Mini romped away to win the class although Steve Muir's Cooper S, having disposed of a truculent misfire, was going well in second place. With David Bray's 1800 cc BDA-engined Escort in the over 1300 cc class it would have needed pretty potent machinery to beat it and David

put in a scorching first run to take the class although Chris Hill's deceptively normal-looking Angas (which was wrongly stated to have a twin-cam motor a couple of weeks ago as it actually has a bored-out pushrod motor), was a worthy second. This is not the easiest of classes to make good championship scores in since Tony Harlewood's DAF set a new bogey time last year beyond reach of most mortals.

The production sports car classes were mostly well supported although Brian Taverder's G15 lacked its usual strong opposition from Alan Bishop's rally-prepared Davrian this week and had an untroubled class win. The class bogey time was reduced fractionally in the 1301-3000 cc class when Raymond Kershberg's extremely potent Elan Sprint shaved just 0.2 s off it in his efforts to beat Paul Simmons' identical car. Malcolm Hayward and Herb Hester's Morgans were the only runners in the over 3-litre class, Hayward being the quicker by just 3 s. In the racing class, Peter Winter's Midget snatched the class from Gary Morse's Clan Crusader in the 1300 cc class and Gordon Bolam's delightful Fiat Abarth 137C Coupe snarled its way round to a class win ahead of Mike Overton's ex-Andreasson Marcos. We may see this car out in Post Historic racing in the near future. Ron Collings and Robbie Gordon shared their jointly-owned Daytona Ferrari lightweight and Ron took nearly 8 s off the previous class bogey time with this handsome motor. All credit though to Jim Tiller in his J2 Caddy-Aillard who defied all the laws of tyre and suspension design to make two tremendous runs in this famous old 1950 car. The Sports and GT car classes were dominated by John Corfield's Martin which again beat Frank Aston's Astra in the 1600 cc class. The 1150 cc class only contained John Elmes and Linda Parrott in their shared Ford Special which, without being mind-blowing in pace, gives them a great deal of sport. Likewise the over 1600 cc contained but one shared Mallock U2, that of Hedley and Norman Hutchings who have come up from Christchurch to each sprint so far to battle it out in this MGB-engined car. David Rinder, last week's BTD winner, had the stronger opposition this week of Bryan Small's Tecno

which is being prepared for Monoposto formula racing with, unusually, a fuel-injected crossflow Ford motor. Still experimenting with injector cam settings, Bryan improved dramatically on his second run to snatch the class from David's Brabham.

As well as the regular classes there were four extra for the Octagonal Die-hards. Alan Goodman's Midget was far and away the quickest in the Sprite and Midget class and Vic Ellis took his "road" MGA to a class win in a rather badly depleted class for the willowy and attractive MGAs. The Triple-M cars were surprisingly rapid for a bunch of pre-war cars and Peter Cranage's long-tailed Magnette was just beaten by Mike Allison's astonishingly quick, fully road-equipped touring NA. Many of the Midgets and "T" types would have settled for his winning time! Gerry Brown was the quickest in the "T" type class, 4 s faster than his nearest opposition Nick Taylor, Alastair Naylor's immaculate C being a close third.

BYD J Corfield (1.6 Martin PVA) 2 m 54.6
Class winners M A in (1.0 Cooper BLAC) 2 m 44.2 s
B Waterhouse (1.6 Lancia Fulvia) 2 m 44.4 s
A Cox (1.0 Cooper S) 2 m 30.0 s. Mrs P. Richardson 1.5 Cooper S 2 m 44.0 s. D. Bay (1.9 Ford Escort BDA) 2 m 30.4 s. B Taverder (1.0 Gnat G15) 2 m 31.0 s. R Kershberg (1.6 Lotus Elan Sprint) 2 m 30.1 s. M Hayward (3.5 Morgan +6) 2 m 30.4 s. P Winter (J2 MG Midget) 2 m 29.0 s. G Bolam (1.6 Fiat Abarth 137C) 2 m 22.4 s. R Collings (4.4 Ferrari Daytona) 2 m 13.2 s. J Elmes (Ford Sp) 2 m 48 s. P Aston (1.6 Group PVA) 2 m 52 s. N Hutchings (1.8 Mallock U2 BMC) 2 m 24.1 s. B Small (1.6 Thorn MRE F100) 2 m 72 s. A Goodman (MG MGA) 2 m 38.6 s. V Ellis (MGA) 2 m 30.2 s. M A Naylor (MG NA) 2 m 52.0 s. G Brown (MG TC) 2 m 40.5 s.

PROD CAR TRIAL

Brian Betteridge's hat-trick

Brian Betteridge, the Walsall butcher, scored his third outright win in succession when he won last Sunday's closed production car trial put on by Shenstone and District CC at Tattenhill near Burton on Trent. The organisers cut three of the sections as their contribution towards petrol economy and the event attracted a healthy 38-strong entry, more than many championship events of recent times.

Betteridge and his Sprite, which was shared by Reg Fitt, having a sports car ride for the first time for many a year, dropped 57 marks on the 28 sections to win by a clear margin on index, his nearest rival being Colin Valentine (Imp), who won the rear-engined class on 85 marks.

The best of the four class battles was undoubtedly in Class 1 where Nick Woollett in his Maxi and Richard Keen (Mini) became the men to watch in the second half when Carl Price's 1100 failed to maintain its early form when it led by four marks at the break. With Price falling back in the afternoon Woollett and Keen struggled for the lead right to the end, Woollett getting the verdict by a single mark 96 marks to 97 marks while Price faded to 111 marks.

The battle of the Ford products in Class 2 went, as expected, to Mike Stephens in the ex-Hazlewood Mexico. Stephens led the class by nine marks at the break and went on to total 81 marks to beat Phil Shaw's car by 16 marks with Ron Berwick (Escort GT) third, a long way behind. Betteridge's form must have given Reg Fitt some good ideas for he won the sports car class by 21 marks after an initial battle with Mrs F Clarke (Midget). A delightful 4½-litre Bentley added colour to the class but was hopelessly outclassed. The rear-engined class saw Valentine out in front from start to finish. He was 15 marks up on S. R. Waite's Imp at the luncheon halt and put on the pressure to such an extent afterwards that he won by 53 marks.

Overall: B Betteridge (Sprite) 57 marks (lost Class winners N Woollett 96 marks M Stephens 81 marks R Fitt (Sprite) C Valentine (Imp) 85 marks Betteridge and Shaw.



Peter Highwood attempts to restrain his Hibex from taking off

TRIAL

New cars appear but Hurt wins



Smallwood — axle trouble. Jackson — 14th place.

After the loss of their site two years ago the Leicestershire CC were more than pleased to be able to reintroduce their John Bull Trophy at Horn Hill Farm, Clipperton, near Market Harborough, more commonly the venue for the "Deargate" earlier in the year. One of the largest entries of this season, 37, was received of which only three non-started.

Amongst the entry much interest was focused upon the cars of Jack Pearce and Gordon Jackson which were making their debut. Pearce's latest Kincraft follows closely the thinking on the Mk III car (now, at least in the hands of Tony Harrison) in shape and engine power, its most distinguishing feature being the roll-over bar fitted to a Kincraft for the first time. Jackson's latest Ibez too is outwardly similar to his previous device but in place of the BMC unit has been installed a 1300 Ford lump bored out to 1440 cc. The Kincraft was destined to retire during the opening round with a broken crankshaft whilst Jackson overcame numerous teething troubles in the timing and carburation departments to bring the car home in 14th place.

Not for the first time this season Lol Hurt must have smiled as he surveyed the damp grassy slopes over which most of the dozen sections were laid out, this was ground ideally suited to his expertise and it was no surprise to see him with a clear lead at the close of the first of the three rounds. The margin of his superiority was clearly apparent when one compared his score of 8 with that of his closest rival, Don Williamson (Duncan) who had lost 37 marks. Two points in arrears Peter Highwood (Hibex) held at bay the Cannon of Frank Lewis with John Benson (Jabs) holding off a strong challenge from the Dryad of Ivor

Portlock. The Club had chosen to run two sections through a bog and although they persevered with one until the close of the first round the second was soon abandoned as cars sank axle deep in the black mire.

Frank Lewis was soon out of the competition when the axle gripped enough during the second round, bringing to a close a fine drive. Whilst drivers continued to struggle for adhesion Hurt kept up a remorseless pressure, failing to clear only three sections with the addition of a further ten points to his early score. Behind the Sheffield driver competitors rose and fell on the leader board like yo-yos. Benson eventually emerging in second spot despite incurring a 12 point penalty for illegal "bouncing" by his passenger. With a total of 64 to his detriment he had forced the gallant Williamson into third spot, the lack of horses from the side-valve Ford unit proving too much of a disadvantage as the ground dried marginally Highwood too was beginning to fall back, having been supplanted by Portlock and finding Julian Fack drawing his Imp powered Canon level with him in fifth place. By the close of the second round both Reg Allen and Laurie Brown (Kincraft and Aberties, respectively) were beginning to come to grips with the conditions and moving into the top ten.

Jeremy Fack lost all chances of completing the full quota of sections when the Panhard rod detached itself from the axle. Running repairs enabled him to contest the last round but he was unclassified at the close. In trouble too was Mike Smallwood whose axle became dissociated from the body when the ball joint sprung apart allowing the apex of the "A" frame to drop. He was more fortunate than the Cannon driver in being able to repair the Delta and continue.

The third and final round only confirmed how much better Hurt is on a surface of this type, the loss of only eight further marks giving him one of his most convincing victories in his long and distinguished career. Benson held on to his second spot with ease but the luckless Williamson fell prey to Portlock, Brown, Fack and Highwood during his slide to seventh place.

With next week's "Gloucester" trial cancelled in deference to the fuel shortage this was the last try-out for competitors before the Semperit/BTRDA Championship trial on Saturday, December 8, which is to be held at the "Johnson" site at Kings Cliffe near Corby.

1. L. Hurt (1.1 BMC Special) 24 pts 2. J. Benson (1.3 Jabs/BMC) 24 3. I. Portlock (1.3 Dryad/BMC) 22 4. L. Brown (1.1 Abertis BMC) 20 5. Julian Fack (1.0 Cannon Chrysler) 16 6. P. Highwood (1.3 Hibex/BMC) 14

Conditions vary

Lunchtime rain and sleet altered conditions dramatically at Leyhams Farm, Keston, Kent, last Sunday when Sevenoaks & District CC held their production car trial which was the third of four events to count for the Association of SE Motor Clubs championship. Thirty five cars started, 33 finished and David Sharpe from Rochester maintained his lead in the championship although he finished third in the rear engine class.

Winner was Garry Taylor in his Ginetta G15 who really came into his own in the slippery conditions of the afternoon. At lunch he had been leading the class but only by a single mark but he drew away steadily to complete the 33 sections with a total of 80 marks lost, 39 better than his nearest class rival Richard Grenville (Imp), who took the rear engine class.

The Minis of Robin Mills, Duncan Welch and Will Patterson filled the places in the FEFWD class with Mills on 148 marks and the winner by 22 marks Mrs Glenys Tomkins put it across the males in the front engine class by leading in her husband's Escort all day. She had a nine mark lead at lunch over Colin Marsh also in an Escort and pulled steadily away to take the class by 27 marks on a 293 mark total with Jim Anderson (Cortina) third: Colin Ling was a lone finisher of three in the sports car class and dropped 187 marks in his Midget.

At lunch in the rear engine class Taylor led with 18 marks lost with Gerald Charge (Imp) on 17 marks and Richard Grenville (Imp) third on 16 marks. Sharpe was well off the class leaderboard with 34 marks lost. Taylor got away immediately on the resumption to build an impregnable lead and Grenville came through to take the class on 99 marks from Sharpe who recovered to a 106 mark total while Charge dropped to third on 109 marks.

Overall: G. Taylor (Ginetta), 80 marks lost. Class winners: R. M. N. M. N. 148 marks Mrs G. Tomkins (Escort), 293 marks C. Ling (Midget), 167 marks. R. Grenville (Imp), 99 marks.

Success for MGB

Twenty-four competitors turned up at Bed-linog, near Caerphilly, last Sunday, for the closed production car trial organised by Welsh Counties CC and Les Raven, driving his MGB, took the top honours dropping 69 marks. Club officials laid on 17 hills which started off in a greasy condition but became steadily more slippery due to a couple of showers. Best dice of the event was in the front engine class where Brian Davies and Melvin O'Brien finished a mark apart in the Lotus Cortinas.

Imps and Minis were mixed together in Class I where Paul Pestlecco emerged an easy victor with 70 marks lost with Les Vincent second in his Mini on 139 and Pat Jerome a long way back in third, also in a Mini. Davies and O'Brien started their day with Davies taking an initial lead and he had built up quite an advantage at three quarter distance but near the end he came unstuck on a couple of hills and O'Brien reduced the gap dramatically only for Davies to hang on to win the class with 96 marks to O'Brien's 97 while P. Corbett (Escort) was 40 marks away for third.

With Raven steadily pulling away at the head of the small entry of sports cars the second place was held easily by Steve Marks in his Midget while Paul Bullock came third with his MGB. The biggest class was for cars with knobby tyres, limited slip diffs, etc, and here Jack Barras emerged with a class win for he dropped only 36 marks with his Midget. Brian Gunney, in a similar car, challenged him strongly to finish only six marks adrift and Roy Les completed a Midget 1, 2, 3 by coming home on 49 marks.

Overall: L. Raven (MGB), 69 marks lost. Class winners: P. Pestlecco (Imp), 70 marks B. Davies (Lotus Cortina), 96 marks; S. Marks (Midget), 90 marks; J. Barras (Midget), 36 marks.

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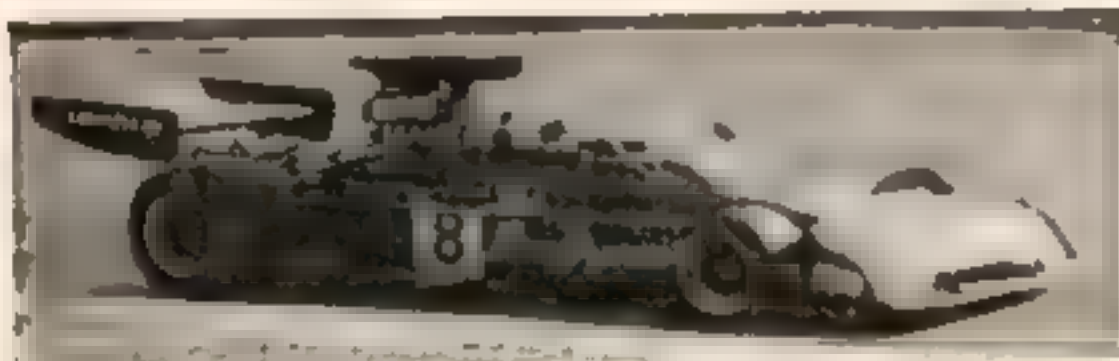
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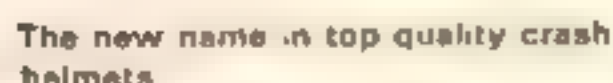
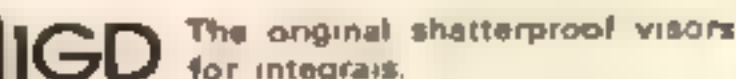
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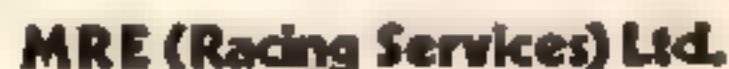
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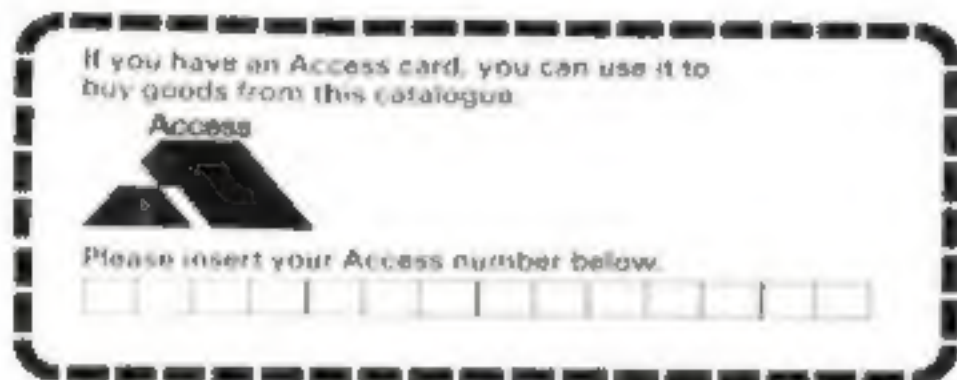
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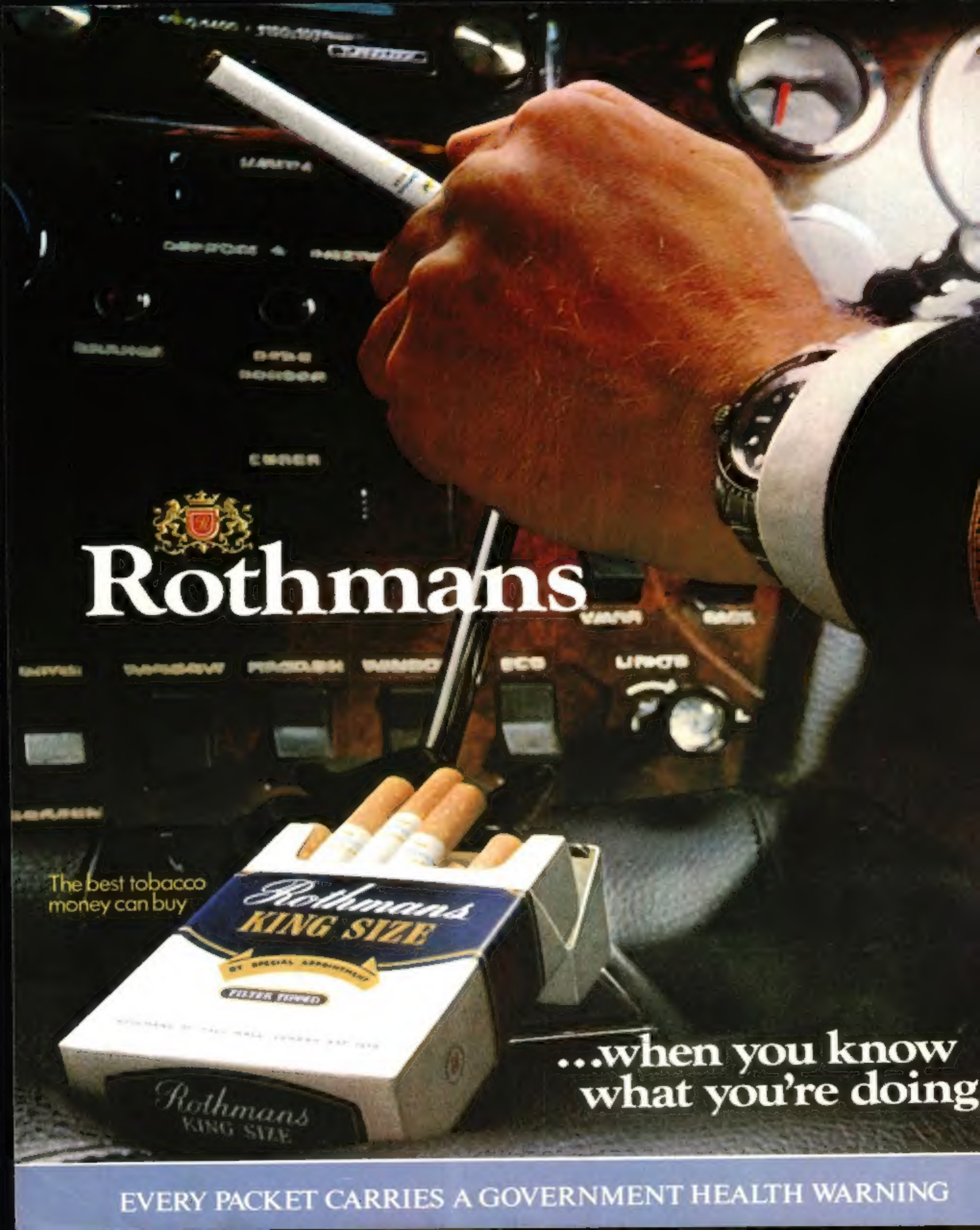
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